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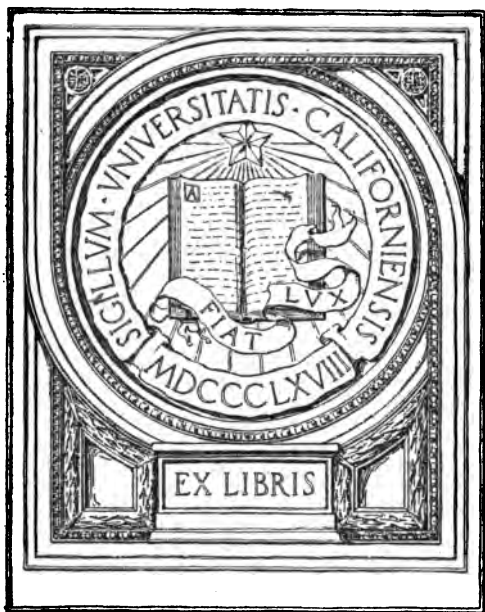
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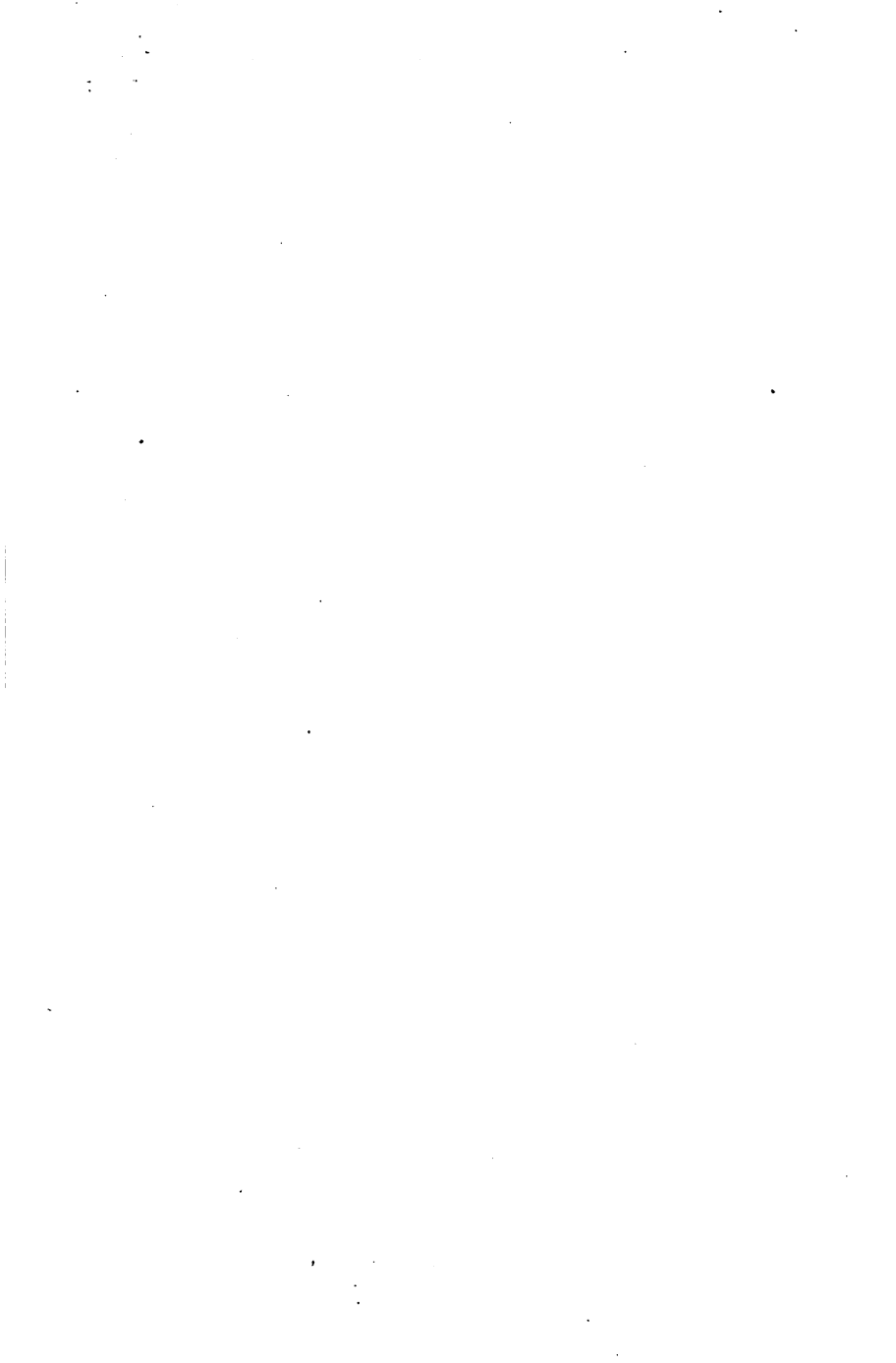
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A CLOUD  
OF  
INDEPENDENT WITNESSES

TO THE

*TRUTH, VALUE, NEED, AND SPIRITUAL HELPFUL-  
NESS OF SWEDENBORG'S TEACHINGS.*

BY

B. F. BARRETT,

AUTHOR OF "THE GOLDEN CITY," "HEAVEN REVEALED," "THE NEW VIEW  
OF HELL," "FOOT-PRINTS OF THE NEW AGE," "THE  
TRUE CATHOLICISM," ETC.

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## PREFACE.

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Let me assure the reader here, in the outset, that this volume has not been written in the interest of any particular sect or denomination, but purely in the interest of religious liberty and unadulterated Christianity.

Hitherto there has prevailed throughout Christendom an intense prejudice against Swedenborg and his teachings, especially among ministers and churches claiming to be evangelical; and much of this prejudice still lingers, even in the most enlightened communities, though with its former intensity and acerbity considerably diminished. Church members are advised by their pastors to shun the writings of this man and his expositors as they would shun what they knew to be spiritual poison; and sometimes excommunication is threatened, and even practiced, as the penalty for reading and accepting the teachings of Swedenborg. The Young Men's Christian Associations generally regard Newchurchmen as non-evangelical, and refuse to receive them into membership on equal terms with other Christians, however blameless and excellent their characters as revealed in their daily lives.

I am sure that no one who reads the following pages can fail to see that this prejudice is utterly blind

and unfounded. Its prevalence in ecclesiastical circles is a powerful hindrance to the progress of the highest religious truth and the growth of the best religious life. Those who harbor it, and are most zealous in their efforts to perpetuate and strengthen it, have no conception of the nature of the work in which they are engaged. Most of them, I doubt not, think that they are really "doing God service," as did the apostle Paul before his conversion, when he "shut up many of the saints in prison, having received authority from the chief priests." For all such blind opponents of the New Christianity, therefore, we can heartily join in the Divine Saviour's prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

We invite the reader's special attention to the fact that not one of the witnesses here summoned is, or ever has been, a member of the organization known as the New Christian Church. Their testimony, therefore, is all the stronger for being perfectly independent, and not open to the suspicion of being prompted by a sectarian spirit, or a desire to strengthen and build up a particular denomination. And it is the testimony of men who are quite familiar with the old theologies—more than a hundred ministers, representing *ten* of the leading Christian denominations—most of them well educated, having been thoroughly trained in theological seminaries, and many of whom have preached the old doctrines from four to forty years. Can we conceive, therefore, of more competent or reliable witnesses in a case like this, or witnesses more worthy of an attentive hearing? And what is their

uniform and concurrent testimony? Why, that the Old theologies, compared with the New as unfolded in the writings of Swedenborg, are as the dim twilight of evening compared with the splendor of noonday.

Then, look at the character of the extracts quoted in the first two hundred pages. These, in the aggregate, cover all the leading and vital doctrines of the Christian religion, and reveal also their spirit and obvious tendency. That their teaching does not chime with the creeds of two or three centuries ago, or with the still prevalent religious dogmas, is very true. But is any of it unscriptural, unreasonable, unphilosophical, or detrimental to the soul's orderly development and noblest growth? Has it not a manifest and strong tendency to draw every honest inquirer nearer to the Lord, and into closer fellowship with the angels of heaven? These are the important questions,—and the reader can answer them for himself when he shall have carefully read the book.

And consider also this other fact, that some of the works herein extensively quoted—and those, too, most thoroughly imbued with the spirit, philosophy and doctrines of Swedenborg, but whose author was not generally known to be a believer of his teachings—have received from the periodical press, both religious and secular, the highest commendation ever bestowed on any religious works published in America. In confirmation of this statement, let the reader turn to pages 144, '65, '88. The wide acceptance of the teachings of these books is indicated by their extensive sale—very extensive for religious works—"Regener-

ation" having passed through *ten* editions, "Foregleams and Foreshadows of Immortality" through *fourteen*, and "The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ," through *nine*.

We call special attention also to this other fact, that, in none of the works herein quoted, and in none of the extracts from more than a hundred letters, is there the least manifestation of a narrow, bigoted, or sectarian spirit, or of a purpose to disturb existing ecclesiastical relations; but instead of this the grand catholicity of the Gospel of our Lord, and an earnest desire for that unity among Christians of whatever name, which is sure to result from the due exaltation of charity above faith, character above creed, life above doctrine.

B. F. B.

*Germantown, Pa.,  
Sept. 28th, 1891.*

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# INDEPENDENT WITNESSES.



# A CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

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## CHAPTER I.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. JOHN CLOWES.

**A**MONG the intelligent receivers and advocates of the doctrines of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem, as taught in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, the name of Rev. John Clowes will ever hold a conspicuous place. No man ever understood these doctrines more clearly than he, or received them more affectionately, or imbibed and exemplified their heavenly spirit more fully, or was more zealous and active in their dissemination among the English-speaking people. He was a member of the Protestant Episcopal church, and Rector of St. John's in Manchester (England) for nearly sixty years; and for more than half a century he taught these doctrines openly from his pulpit, to large and delighted audiences. He conversed and lectured on them at his own house, and on all suitable occasions elsewhere. He wrote numerous letters about them to his friends at home and

abroad. He translated eighteen volumes of Swedenborg's works, and wrote and published more than forty of his own (great and small), in explanation and vindication of their teachings. The manner of his conversion to the New Theology is worthy of record, and cannot fail to interest every Christian believer. It was not less remarkable than was Paul's conversion to Christianity. Indeed, it so closely resembled that of the great Apostle, that, viewed in connection with his zeal and success in propagating the New Christianity, he may not inappropriately be called a second Paul.

Shortly after his acceptance of the Rectorship of St. John's Church, Mr. Clowes formed the acquaintance of Richard Houghton, Esq., of Liverpool, a gentleman of great learning and piety, and a diligent reader and enthusiastic admirer of the writings of Swedenborg. Mr. Houghton urged him, in a manner so affectionate, sincere and earnest, to read "The True Christian Religion,"—not then translated into English—that he at once sent to London and purchased a copy. But when he had procured it, he felt not the slightest inclination to read it; and it remained upon the shelf several months unexamined and untouched. He had noticed that it treated mainly on doctrinal points, and in these he felt no interest. Besides, he was well satisfied with his spiritual attainments, and

thought he had no need to trouble or concern himself with questions of a speculative nature, which he did not think could add either to his sanctity or inward peace.

“Alas!” says he, “I was not aware, at the time, either of the pearls of wisdom which I was overlooking, or of my own want of them, both for ornament and for use. I was deceiving myself (as is the case, it is to be feared, with many Christians) by supposing that I had attained the highest point of Christian purification and perfection, and was already in full possession of the supreme good and the supreme truth, without considering that the Christian life is a continually progressive life, and that to stand still, therefore, under any present attainments, whether of goodness or wisdom, is to change its character from progressive to stagnant.”

#### *HIS CONVERSION TO THE NEW CHRISTIANITY.*

At length a remarkable circumstance occurred which induced him to take up and read with care and without prejudice, the hitherto neglected volume. The following is the account of it as written by himself:—

“In the month of October, immediately succeeding

the spring when the *True Christian Religion* was recommended to me by my friend at Liverpool, I went, according to annual custom, to visit an old college pupil of mine, the late Right Honorable John Smith, of Heath, in the county of York. On the evening before I set out, I opened the long-neglected volume, not with a view to read it, but merely to get a better idea of the general nature of its contents, when, in turning over the pages, I happened to cast my eye upon the term *Divinum Humanum*. The term appeared new and strange, but still it did not affect my mind in a manner to produce any lasting impression; and accordingly, on shutting up the book, it seemed to be forgotten and gone. Probably, too, it would never again have been recalled to my remembrance had it not been for the following memorable circumstance.

“On awaking early one morning, not many days after my arrival at my friend’s house, my mind was suddenly and powerfully drawn into a state of inward recollection, attended with an inexpressible calm and composure, into which was instilled a tranquillity of peace and heavenly joy, such as I had never before experienced. Whilst I lay musing on this strange, and to me most delightful harmony in the interiors of my mind, instantly there was made manifest, in the same recesses of my spirit, what I can call by no

other name than a *divine glory*, surpassing all description, and exciting the most profound adoration. But what seemed to me the most singular circumstance on this occasion, was, that I was strongly impressed at the time, by a kind of internal dictate, that *the glory* was in close connection with that *Divinum Humanum*, or *Divine Humanity*, above mentioned, and proceeded from it as from its proper divine source.

“*The glory* continued during a full hour, allowing me sufficient time both to view and analyze it. Sometimes I closed my bodily eyes, and then opened them again, but *the glory* remained the same. It is well, however, to be understood that there was no appearance presented of any visible form, but only a strong persuasion that *the glory* proceeded from a visible form, and that this form was no other than the *Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ*.

“When *the glory* disappeared, as it did by degrees, I quitted my bed; but the recollection of what had happened attended me during the whole of the day, whether I was in company or alone; and what is still more remarkable, the next morning on my first awaking, *the glory* was again manifested; but, if possible, with increased splendor. Now, too, a singular effect was produced by it upon my mind, convincing me of the spiritual and providential origin of what I had



seen, by the important end to which it pointed, and was designed to conduct me. The effect was no other than the excitement of a strong and almost irresistible desire to return home immediately, in order to enter upon a serious and attentive perusal of the *neglected volume*, which I had left behind me. And such was the powerful impulse of this desire, that although I had intended to remain with my friend a week or a fortnight longer, yet I made some excuse for quitting his house the next day, and hastened back to Manchester rather with the impetuosity of a lover than with the sedateness of a man who had no other object of pursuit but to consult the pages of an unknown and heretofore slighted book."

A sudden change in Mr. Clowes' feeling toward the neglected volume, was wrought by this circumstance. He immediately felt an uncontrollable desire to read the book. He did read it—and his interest and delight in its teachings increased with every page he read. To cite his own words:—

"It is impossible for any language to express the full effect wrought in my mind by the perusal of this wonderful book. Suffice it, therefore, to observe that in proceeding from the chapter on the Creator and on Creation to the succeeding chapters on the Redeemer

and Redemption, on the Divine Trinity, on the Sacred Scriptures or Word of God, on the Decalogue, on Faith, on Charity, on Free-will, on Repentance, on Reformation and Regeneration, on Imputation, on Baptism, on the Holy Supper, on the Consummation of the Age, the Advent of the Lord, and the New Heaven and the New Church, it seemed as if a continually increasing blaze of new and re-creating light was poured forth on the delighted understanding, opening it to the contemplation of the most sublime mysteries of wisdom, and convincing it of the being of a God, of the existence of an eternal world, of the interior sanctities of the Holy Scriptures, of the true nature of creation, redemption and regeneration, in a manner and degree, and with a force of satisfactory evidence, in which those interesting subjects had never been viewed before.

“The mind, therefore, was no longer perplexed about the proper Object of its worship, because it was enlightened to see clearly—as by the light of a meridian sun—that Jesus Christ in his Divine Humanity is that Object, He being the Creator from eternity, the Redeemer in time, and the Regenerator to eternity, thus containing in his own Divine Person the sacred Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Father being his hidden essence, the Son his manifested existence, and the Holy Spirit his proceeding operation. In

like manner all difficulties and doubts were removed respecting the sacred Scriptures, or Word of God, through the bright and heretofore unseen manifestation of their spiritual and interior contents, by virtue of which discovery apparent inconsistencies vanished, apparent contradictions were reconciled; and what before seemed trivial and nugatory, assumed a new and interesting aspect; while the whole volume of Revelation was seen to be full of sanctity, of wisdom and of love from its Divine Author, and also to be in perpetual connection with that Author, who is its inmost soul—*its essential Spirit and Life.*”

Such is the account which Mr. Clowes himself has given of his conversion to the New Christianity, and his intense and steadily increasing interest in the New Jerusalem verities.

#### *HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.*

And what was the character of the man who relates this remarkable experience? What reputation did he bear among his contemporaries and acquaintances? The fact that he was Rector of St. John's Church for more than half a century, and retained for this whole period the affection of his people in a manner almost without a parallel—and this, too, notwithstanding his known interest in the doctrines of the New Church,

and his zeal in disseminating them—is sufficient evidence on this point. Seldom has a higher tribute of praise been offered to the memory of any man, and never a tribute better deserved, than that which was spontaneously poured forth through the columns of the public journals at the time of his death. *The London Times* (June 4, 1831,) said:—

“ His affections were ever alive toward all who came within the sphere of his usefulness; and it would have been difficult for any one to resist the influence of that goodness which showed itself in all he did, or said, or looked; and to have been with him, even for a little while, without being impressed with a sense of the loveliness of Christian principle as it was exemplified in him. . . . In simplicity of heart, in unity of purpose, in the abandonment of every selfish consideration, in the unclouded and playful cheerfulness of a pure and benevolent mind, in the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the beauty and happiness of genuine holiness, he truly adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. Those who did not know him, may believe this tribute to be the offspring of strong friendship and affection; but the many who did, will feel how inefficient must be the attempt rightly to commemorate his admirable and truly Christian excellences.”

The *Manchester Courier*, in an obituary of the same date, said :—

“ In recording the excellence of this venerable man and truly apostolic minister, it may be allowed to mark, as prominent features of a character in which all was lovely, his child-like simplicity, his singleness of heart, the elevation of his devotion, the cheerfulness of his piety, the beauty of his holiness, . . . the ease of his seriousness, the innocence of his mirth, the purity of his exuberant joy.

“ He was admirable in all the faculties and powers of an enlightened mind ; but the charm by which he won and ruled the hearts of all, was that grace in man which is the nearest image on earth of a holy and merciful God,—the boundless benevolence of a truly catholic spirit.

“ This admirable person enjoyed, in a singular degree, through life, the respect and affection of all by whom he was known ; but, in an especial manner, the veneration of his own flock, over which (and it was his first and only care of souls) he was, by God’s providence, the shepherd for the very unusual term of nearly sixty-two years.”

*MR. NOBLE'S ESTIMATE OF HIM.*

Rev. Samuel Noble, a distinguished New Church writer, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Clowes, speaks of him as the "principal instrument" in extending the knowledge of Swedenborg's teachings throughout the kingdom of Great Britain. He compares him with the illustrious seer, and thinks he stood to him in a relation similar to that of Aaron to Moses. He says :

"To Britons, and to all who speak the language of Britain, he stood in a relation toward Swedenborg analogous to that which Aaron bore to Moses. But for him, or some other person raised to fill the office which he discharged so well, Swedenborg must still have been, to almost all, both in a natural and spiritual point of view, as Moses says of himself, 'slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;'—unintelligible to the generality, not more for the learned language in which he wrote, than for the elevated and abstract character of the divine truths which he delivered. But in Mr. Clowes he found a genuine 'brother,'—a kindred spirit, eminently qualified, as another Aaron, to be his 'spokesman unto the people.' This character he sustained not only by the translation of his works from Latin into English, which any other learned man

might, if sufficiently zealous and industrious, have accomplished, but by a talent for bringing down the interior truths which they contain to the comprehension of the most simple and common understanding, and presenting them in the most engaging form, even to the adapting of them for the instruction of children. It is owing, I verily believe, as its *immediate* cause, to our having had a Clowes, that the doctrines of the New Church have made greater progress in England, and in the United States of America (the people of which are still Englishmen as to language), than in any other country upon earth. No wonder, then, if one who was to be the instrument of such extensive usefulness, was called to the work by as special a divine interposition as was vouchsafed to Swedenborg himself."

And for more than fifty years this gifted and most estimable man read and circulated the writings of Swedenborg, and openly taught the doctrines they contained as "the genuine doctrines of Christianity." But he did not do it without opposition, nor without some harsh treatment and bitter persecution by ministers of his own denomination. At one time there were three clergymen in his neighborhood, who held regular weekly meetings for the purpose of crushing "the growing heresy." The most un-

founded rumors respecting Swedenborg and his doctrines, and the most bitter and scurrilous invectives, emanated from this source almost daily. Nor were his persecutors content with employing their tongues only; they had recourse to their pens. They wrote and published a pamphlet in which they endeavored to prove that the writings of Swedenborg were opposed to religion and common sense. Mr. Clowes at once replied to this pamphlet. They next appealed to the Right Rev. Dr. Porteus, then Bishop of the Diocese, preferring, in a formal manner, the four following charges against Mr. Clowes: 1st; that he denied the *Trinity*; 2d, that he denied the *Atonement*; 3d, that he went about the country endeavoring to *propagate the New Doctrines*; 4th, that he had *private meetings* at his own house for the *same purpose*. Mr. Clowes was accordingly summoned to appear before the Bishop to answer to these charges. He appeared and answered—in a manner, it is said, quite satisfactory to the Bishop, who is reported to have said afterwards, that he “wished there were many more John Clowes in his diocese.” This damped the ardor of his persecutors; and from that time he was permitted to preach and publish his own sentiments without further molestation.

It was in the fourth year after his acceptance of the pastorate of St. John's Church, that Mr. Clowes com-



menced the study of the heavenly doctrines; and during the remainder of his earthly life he was a diligent student and faithful teacher of these doctrines as expounded by Swedenborg and unfolded from the higher and heavenly sense of the Sacred Scriptures.

“No sooner,” he says, “had I finished the perusal of the True Christian Religion, than the treatise on Heaven and Hell, the Arcana Cœlestia, the Apocalypse Revealed, the Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom, and also concerning the Divine Providence, the Delights of Wisdom concerning Conjugal Love, etc., with other minor tracts by the same author, were successively read, or rather devoured; and as constantly excited wonder, delight and edification. At the same time a strong and ardent desire was enkindled to put others in possession of the same sources of heavenly intelligence; and this desire frequently, yet tacitly, expressed itself in those words of the great Saviour, where he prays, ‘*Father that they may be with me, to behold Thy glory.*’ John xvii: 24. For the whole testimony as delivered by the messenger of the New Jerusalem verities in his theological writings, appeared to my mind like a *radiant glory from the face of Jesus Christ*, and repeatedly called to my recollection the words of that incarnate God, where, speaking of his second advent,

He says, ‘*Then shall ye see the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*’—Matt. xxiv : 30.”

And in his autobiography, or narrative of his religious experience, written when he was seventy-five years of age, and after he had experienced the enlightening and comforting influence of the truths of the New Church for nearly half a century, he says :—

“The author cannot conclude his narrative without offering up to the Father of Mercies his most devout and grateful acknowledgments for the extraordinary privilege and inestimable blessing vouchsafed him, in having been admitted to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth and importance of the doctrines unfolded by Swedenborg from the Word of God, as the genuine doctrines of Christianity. For what worldly glory, gain, or happiness can stand in competition with this,—to know Jesus Christ to be the only true God, and to be allowed to approach and worship Him in His Divine Humanity; to be delivered thus from all perplexity as to the proper object of worship; to see, at the same time, the divine volume of Revelation opened; its interior treasures displayed; its evidence and authority thus

confirmed by its divine contents ; its apparent contradictions reconciled ; whilst all that is divine and holy, all that is good and true, all that is calculated to excite the veneration of intelligent beings, and the affection of penitent ones ; all, in short, that has a tendency either to enlighten the human understanding, or to purify the human will ; either to edify, by the bright and profound lessons of divine truth, or to soften and console by the sweet and tender influences of the divine love, is perceived to proceed from this Divine Fountain, as its only source !

“ Yet such is the transcendent glory, gain, and happiness imparted to every penitent and devout receiver of the above heavenly doctrines. Add to this, the nearness and connection between this world and another, demonstrated by such a weight of irresistible evidence ; the great evangelical doctrines of faith, of charity, of repentance and remission of sins, of temptation, reformation, regeneration, the freedom of the will opened, explained, and enforced, according to their edifying and important meaning ; the nature, also, and effect of the Last Judgment, the Lord's second advent, and the descent of the New Jerusalem, presented to view in all the brightness and fulness of truth, and confirmed by the testimony of the sure Word of prophecy ; and some faint idea may then be formed of the immense debt of gratitude owing at

this day from all the families of the earth to their heavenly Father.

“For who, except that Father, ‘whose tender mercies are over all His works,’ could thus cause His light to shine in darkness, for the deliverance of His people from evil, from error, and from destruction, and, at the same time, for the guidance of their feet into the ways of righteousness, truth, and salvation? To his praises and most unfeigned thankfulness on this occasion, the author is lastly urgent to add his ardent prayers, that the above glorious light may shine in every corner of the habitable globe, until the whole earth becomes that blessed tabernacle of God which was announced to be with men, in which ‘God will dwell and be with them their God, and wipe away all tears from their eyes.’ Rev. xxi: 3, 4.

“Nor can he entertain a doubt but that, sooner or later, this prayer will be fulfilled, inasmuch as the Almighty pledged Himself for its fulfilment, when the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.’ Rev. xi: 15.

“In the full persuasion, then, that all these glorious things are coming to pass, and, indeed, in some degree are already come to pass, the author cannot express

the state of his mind in language more appropriate than that of the devout man of old, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.' Luke ii: 29 to 33. AMEN.

“‘GLORY BE TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST.’

“MANCHESTER, February 28, 1818.”

Here we have the testimony of one of the purest and best men that ever lived, and one who was *capable* of judging between the Old and the New Christian Theology. He had been familiar with the Old doctrines from his childhood; had studied and preached them for several years. He understood equally well, too, the doctrines of the New Church as unfolded in the writings of Swedenborg; for he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with these by long and patient examination. And what is his testimony? Why, that the Old as compared with the New, is as darkness to light. In respect to all the great doctrines of Christianity—the doctrines concerning God, the Sacred Scripture, the Spiritual World, Creation, Redemption, Regeneration, etc.—he confesses that the perusal of Swedenborg's True Christian Religion had opened

his mind to the contemplation of sublime mysteries of wisdom "in a manner and degree, and with a force of satisfactory evidence, in which those interesting subjects *had never been viewed before.*"

*HIS ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY.*

And before his death this saintly man wrote an "AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY," urging them for their own sakes as well as for the sake of the Lord's kingdom on earth, to give the writings of Swedenborg a patient and prayerful examination. His appeal to his brother ministers is so affectionate and earnest, and the request he makes is so reasonable, that no apology is needed for introducing liberal extracts from it here.

"REV. BRETHREN,—Deeply impressed with veneration for your sacred character as ministers of the truth, and with as real a concern for the interests of that truth of which you are the ministers, I feel myself induced by many powerful and pressing motives, to call your attention for a moment to a few considerations respecting the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, so far as the contents of those writings appear to me more immediately to affect the duties imposed on you by your holy function and high station.

“You are in a peculiar sense the *Ministers of God*, entrusted with the oracles of his Word, and commissioned to read, to meditate upon, to understand, to preach and explain, the laws of the eternal wisdom therein contained. From you the people receive the interpretation of those laws, and *their* understanding of them must needs, in a great measure, depend on *yours*. If the light which is in you be darkness, the light which is in the people will most probably be darkness also; but if your *bodies be full of light*, it may then be reasonably expected that those of the people will be likewise *full of light*. The state, therefore, of religious knowledge in the land, will ever take its standard from *you*, and of consequence, whatsoever is connected with religious knowledge has a peculiar claim upon your attention, and you must necessarily feel yourselves bound by every motive of duty and good conscience to take cognizance thereof in the fear of God, and out of due regard to the interests of that truth with which you are more especially entrusted. . . .

“The theological writings in question are confessedly of a *religious* kind, treating on *religious* subjects; and containing various and interesting explications of the WORD OF GOD, which is the divine fountain and foundation of all *religion*. Much wonderful, and hitherto hidden, information respecting *religion*, is brought

to light in them. Various *religious* errors are detected and exposed, various *religious* truths too are manifested, recommended and confirmed.

*THEIR DUTY TO EXAMINE THESE WRITINGS.*

"*The ministers of religion*, therefore, must needs feel themselves particularly interested in, and in duty bound to a careful and candid examination of, these writings, and of the ground and reasonableness of those high titles by which they are announced to the public. And as such examination implies at least perusal, serious attention, candor and impartiality of judgment, the exercise of these virtues will also be expected from you. To condemn, therefore, or approve blindly; to suffer your judgment to be influenced by popular prejudice, or to be determined by the sentiments of others rather than by your own; to be deterred from engaging in a deliberate and equitable inquiry, because you have heard the author vilified, and his works stigmatized by those who perhaps *never read them*, or who have an *interest in condemning them*; all this would be criminal in you, and expose you to the censure of all wise and discerning men, and especially of your own consciences at that hour when you appear in private before the Maker of hearts and the Inspector of secret purposes.



“Let it be supposed for a moment, that you had lived in Judea at the time when the incarnate Word appeared there *to give light to them who sat in darkness* ; and that your names at this interesting period had been enrolled in the Jewish priesthood: It is very plain that under these circumstances your duty would have called you to form a judgment of that wonderful person, his pretensions and his doctrine. But in forming this judgment, would you have thought it sufficient to hearken only to the voice of the multitude? ‘*Some said he is a good man, and that never man spake like him ; others said nay, but he deceiveth the people ; he has a devil and is mad, why hear ye him ?*’ The voice of the multitude, therefore, was divided, and might have led you right or led you wrong, according as you received your report from this or that quarter. But would you have thought it safe, or prudent, or conscientious, or becoming your characters as members of the Sanhedrim, entrusted with the oracles of God and the interpretation of prophecy and the instruction of the people, and peculiarly called at that period of time to discover the marks of Messiahship, to detect false pretenders, and point out the true Christ—would you, I say, have thought it safe and equitable under these circumstances, to see with another’s eyes, and hear with another’s ears, instead of using your own? Would you not rather have thought it your

duty, and have made it your business, to see and hear the wonderful man yourselves? to examine his doctrines and pretensions impartially? to acquaint yourselves with the tenor of his life and conversation? to remove from your own hearts every unreasonable suspicion, jealousy, or prejudice, which might pervert your judgment? in short, so to consult, by sincerity and purity of intention, the divine will and wisdom in yourselves, that you might *know of the doctrine whether it were of God*, or whether the speaker spake of himself? . . . .

#### A COMMON OBJECTION CONSIDERED.

“But methinks I hear you urge, as a final and unanswerable argument against acceding to the testimony of Swedenborg, that the dispensation of grace and truth in Jesus Christ, when he became incarnate here on earth, is the last and crowning dispensation which God hath to offer unto mankind; that it is all-complete and all-sufficient for every purpose of salvation, being the end of the law and the prophets, and containing so full and perfect a revelation of the will of the Creator to his creatures, as to supersede the necessity of any further dispensation; consequently no further dispensation is to be expected, and nothing is required of the ministers of the gospel but to believe in and preach Jesus Christ and obedience to his com-

mandments, which will be abundantly competent to secure every possible blessing both to themselves and the people committed to their care.—It is granted: The dispensation of grace and truth in Jesus Christ is as you represent it, all-complete and all-sufficient; and it will assuredly be well with you and with your people, and you can want no other dispensation to secure your eternal happiness, if Jesus Christ be preached, and his commandments obeyed. But let me ask, is this the case?

“In the first place, is Jesus Christ preached? Do you believe on him yourselves as the **ONE ONLY LORD AND GOD** of Heaven and Earth, and do you teach your people so to believe on him? Do you acknowledge the **FATHER** and the **SON** to be *one in Him*, as he Himself hath taught? and that of consequence He is the manifested Jehovah, the sole Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator of man? Or rather, have not some among you entirely rejected this your God, by denying his Divinity? And have not others divided this one only Lord and God into three, making one God of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost? Do you not regard **JESUS CHRIST** either as a mere creature, or as a Divine Person separate from, and subordinate to, the Father? Do you not regard the Holy Ghost as a Person separate from both, assigning to each separately distinct attributes

and offices? Is not your idea of God become thus altogether confused and perplexed, so that you know not to what or to whom to direct your worship, sometimes addressing yourselves to the Father, sometimes to the Son, and sometimes to the Holy Ghost; but never to Jesus Christ alone as the one only God, in whose divine person the sacred Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is contained? And is not this confusion and perplexity in your ideas of Jesus Christ manifested by want of power in your public preaching and ministry? . . . .

*THEIR NEGLECT TO EXAMINE INEXCUSABLE.*

"I repeat it, therefore, again; be these writings true or false; be their authority well or ill-founded; be they from the *Father of Lights*, or from the *father of lies*, it is your office and duty, as ministers of the truth, to examine well into the nature of their evidence, and the degree of credibility which is due to them. You cannot possibly excuse yourselves from the discharge of this duty. A regard to truth and the interests of religion demands it of you; and you are bound to greater caution herein, inasmuch as the judgment you form will not affect yourselves only, but will affect also the people committed to your care; so that the salvation of thousands may possibly depend

upon your decision in this interesting case. If Swedenborg, therefore, be a *heaven-taught scribe*, your own consciences will dictate to you in a more powerful language than that of any human words, how you ought to hear what he teaches; and not only hear him yourselves, but also make his doctrines known to others, as far as ability is given. And if he be a *false teacher* and deceiver, you are still equally bound to discover and make known the fallacy and deceitfulness by which he hath already begun to impose upon thousands, that so the error may be nipped in the bud.

#### EXISTING AND GROUNDLESS PREJUDICES.

“Many *prejudices*, it must be acknowledged, arising from a variety of sources, at present stand in the way to oppose in your minds the testimony of the honorable author here presented before you. But, let me ask, what teacher of truth, whether ancient or modern, religious or philosophical, hath not *prejudice* opposed? The prophets of old, you well know, were each of them in their turn, violently assaulted by *prejudice*. The God of Truth Himself, when manifested in the flesh, did not escape *prejudice*. His most venerable followers in all ages, after the example of their Divine Master, have had to combat with the same unreasonable adversary, *prejudice*. *Prejudice*, too, has had the

boldness to oppose the conclusions of a sound philosophy, as well as of a sound theology ; and you need not be informed that, had the voice of *prejudice* prevailed, the brightest discoveries of the most able philosopher that ever contemplated the works of the God of nature, had still laid buried in obscurity.

. . . . .

“ I wish only further to observe on the subject, that it is impossible for you to read many pages of the writings in question, seriously, and in a Christian spirit, without discovering some things of importance which must needs affect every well-disposed mind. You will see, for example, the Divinity of the Christian Redeemer, and his oneness with the Father, principally insisted upon, and demonstrated with such a power of solid proof, deduced from the Sacred Scriptures in general, as will supply the most effectual antidote against the poisonous tenets of modern *Arianism* and *Socinianism*. You will see, also, the sacred doctrine of the HOLY TRINITY explained, and elucidated in a manner so simple and yet sublime, so agreeable to the Word of God and at the same time so consonant to sound reason, so satisfactory to the understanding and so edifying to the life, that you will wonder how so much darkness could ever prevail in the world respecting so bright and clear a truth ; but you will wonder still more, that now the

truth is discovered in its brightness, all mankind do not immediately assent to and rejoice in it. You will see, likewise, the *sanctity of the Holy Scriptures* taught and explained, and the hidden wisdom thereof opened and brought to light by the *doctrine of correspondences*, with such a fullness of conviction as will at the same time both greatly astonish and edify you, while it supplies an *internal evidence* of the Divinity of the sacred Word, and particularly of the Apocalyptic part of it, infinitely surpassing, yet not overturning but confirming, all its *external evidence*.

#### PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE NEW DOCTRINES.

“You will see, further, the purest, plainest, and most consistent *doctrine of life* presented to your view, and contrasted with those impure, dark, and inconsistent tenets which are at this day so frequently taught and circulated under the venerable name of Christian precepts. And here you will be surprised to find every evil of life, and every error of doctrine, detected and described, which in these latter times threaten the very existence of religion in the kingdoms of the earth, and cause so much serious alarm in the minds of many Christians who look further than the mere skin and complexion of the Church to

form a judgment of the soundness of its constitution. You will see, also, pointed out, the root whence such anti-Christian evils and errors have sprung—how they have all originated in mistaken ideas of the Divine Being, his nature and mode of existence and operation, and in the consequent separation of the three *essentials* of Christian life and salvation, viz.: *charity, faith and good works.*

“And while you lament the unhappy causes and consequences of such an unscriptural and irrational theology which you will here see figuratively depicted under the significative images of *Dragon, Beast, false Prophet, and the great Whore*, mentioned in the Revelation, you will not fail to rejoice in the prospect of an order of pure truth and doctrine about to be manifested from Heaven to mankind, signified and represented by the *Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven*, whereby all false, perverted principles of faith and life will be dissipated in such minds as are meet for its reception; and the understanding be enlightened, the will purified, and the life be restored to the order of heaven; a near and blessed conjunction will again take place between the Creator and his creatures, predicted and described in these words: ‘*The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them their God.*’



## PREPARATION FOR THEIR RECEPTION.

“But after all, it is not the testimony of fact and experience uniting their evidence with that of our author’s interpretation of prophecy; neither is it the brightness and power of divine truth discoverable in such interpretation; nor yet the consistency, the harmony, the clearness, the edifying tendency of every page of his Theological Writings, which will of *themselves* lead to conviction, and beget a full persuasion of the author’s faithful testimony in your minds or in the minds of others. To produce this happy effect, it is necessary that the reader’s understanding be *previously prepared, by a meet disposition, for the reception of truth*; without which preparation the truth itself, let it be ever so much confirmed, must needs appear untrue, and the more so in proportion to the unprepared state of the mind and temper, agreeable to the declaration of the TRUTH ITSELF, ‘*He who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*’

“If this consideration is permitted to have its due influence, it will doubtless lead you, and every reader of the writings in question, to attend well to the spirit and disposition in which you read, from a prudent and profitable suspicion that something may be wrong in the state of the person’s mind who reads, as well

as in the matter of the book which he reads; and that it is not always the fault of an author that his works are not generally received and approved. You will, therefore, begin, like pure lovers of the truth, before you read, to remove from your hearts all those unreasonable prejudices and partialities which might tend to blind your eyes and pervert your judgment. You will recollect our Lord's words where he saith, *'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;'* and with these words in your remembrance, you will see the expediency of putting away from you all that *mere worldly wisdom and prudence* which they condemn as tending to hide the things of God, and the equal necessity of cherishing that child-like and simple temper of mind to which *alone* the things of God ever have been and ever will be made manifest.

"You will be taught, also, by the same divine words, in your examination of truth, not to place an ill-grounded dependence on any attainments of mere human science, or any natural talents or intellectual abilities you may possess; knowing that such advantages, unless under the guidance of a humble and teachable spirit, have, in all ages of the Church, excited the bitterest persecution against the truth of

God, insomuch that when this Truth appeared on earth in Person, the cry of *Crucify him, crucify him*, was principally at the instigation of learned critics, deep-read scholars, admired orators, inquisitive philosophers, and especially of what were deemed at the time able expositors of the Divine Oracles. You will be further cautioned by the above words, in your examination of truth, against that servile attachment to great names, and the influence of human authorities, which is ever suggesting the old question, *Have any of the rulers believed on him?* And remembering that rulers may be deceived, and have been deceived, as well as other people, yea, and are frequently more exposed to deception, as being more exposed to the temptations arising from an overweening conceit of their own *wisdom and prudence*, you will assert the freedom of thinking and judging for yourselves in that which so essentially concerns yourselves; and will be bold, in the pursuit of truth, not only to oppose all motives of worldly interest and honor, but even the most respectable powers and authorities amongst men, whensoever they stand in competition with the higher power and authority of that *wisdom which is from above*.

“Commending you to the guidance of this wisdom in all things, and sincerely wishing you in possession

of all its comforts, I remain, with all possible veneration for your sacred office and character,

*"Your affectionate Brother and Fellow-laborer in the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, to whom be Glory and Dominion in all Ages,*

*"JOHN CLOWES."*

Such is the independent and unbiased testimony of a minister of the Church of England, to the truth and value of Swedenborg's writings;—the testimony, too, not of an ignorant or prejudiced man, but of one who had acquainted himself with these writings by patient and thorough study of them. Such the judgment of a singularly wise and good man, as to the relative beauty and excellence of the two systems of Christian theology—the Old and the New.

#### *HIS IDEA OF THE NEW CHURCH.*

Mr. Clowes was eminently qualified, by the purity of his heart and life, to understand and interpret the teachings of Swedenborg. No man was more competent than he. And the fact that he remained in connection with the Episcopal Church after receiving the heavenly doctrines, shows how thoroughly he appreciated the non-sectarian and catholic spirit of these doctrines. And he has left on record his idea

of the nature and whereabouts of the New Church. In one of his works he says :—

“I apprehend that by the term *New Church*, is not meant a mere new Sect, or particular denomination of Christians, as Quakers, Moravians, Methodists, and the like; but that it denotes a Dispensation of universal grace, mercy and truth to the whole human race, without exception or limitation of time, place or sect.”—*Dialogue between Sophron and Philadelphus.*

“Nothing, therefore, can be plainer, than that the New Jerusalem Dispensation is to be universal, and to extend unto all people, nations and languages on the face of the earth, to be a blessing unto such as are meet to receive a blessing. Sects and sectarians, as such, can find no place in this General Assembly of the ransomed of the Lord. All the little distinctions of modes, forms and particular expressions of devotion and worship, will be swallowed up and lost in the unlimited effusions of heavenly love, charity and benevolence with which the hearts of every member of this glorious New Church and Body of Jesus Christ will overflow one toward another. Men will no longer judge one another as to the mere externals of church communion, be they perfect or be they imperfect; for they will be taught that whosoever acknowledges the incarnate Jehovah in heart and life, departing from all

evil, and doing what is right and good according to the commandments, he is a member of the New Jerusalem, a living stone in the Lord's new Temple, and a part of that great family in heaven and earth, whose common Father and Head is Jesus Christ. Every one, therefore, will call his neighbor *Brother*, in whom he observes this spirit of pure charity; and he will ask no questions concerning the form of words which compose his creed, but will be satisfied with observing in him the purity and power of a heavenly life."—*Ibid.*

He did not believe in separating from other Christian communions on receiving the heavenly doctrines. He regarded such separation as unauthorized and needless, so long as one's Christian rights and privileges are not denied him. He believed it was fraught with danger and tended to foster the growth of a sectarian and anti-Christian spirit. He, therefore, spoke against it, wrote against it, and worked against it till the day of his death. He published a discourse on this subject, under the title of "An Address from the Translator to the Readers of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, intended to point out the general design and tendency of those Writings, and particularly to show that they do not authorize their readers in a separation, at this time, from external

communion with other professing Christians." And after remarking upon some of the dangers to be apprehended from such separation, he says:—

"Would the compass of this address permit, I could here point out some other dangers to be apprehended by the New Church from a sudden separation from external communion with other professing Christians, such as particularly the danger of falling into a sectarian spirit, and thereby despising or thinking lightly of all others, who are not worshipping God according to certain forms expressed in a peculiar language. But I trust that what has been already said, will be sufficient to convince every candid reader of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, that such separation is neither prudent nor expedient at this time whilst the New Church is in its present infant state, nor yet agreeable to the sentiments of our enlightened author."

And in this address, Mr. Clowes gives his idea of the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem.

"It is a church," he says, "not to be limited by any external forms or ceremonies of worship, neither to be pointed out by a lo here! or lo there! but universal as the reception of heavenly truth and obedience

to its dictates, consisting of the upright and sincere in heart among all people, nations and languages, and forming one grand body or kingdom here on earth, whereof the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the soul or head, and of which all are living members who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Woe be to those who would endeavor to confine this blessed tabernacle and temple of the Most High and Holy One within any pale of their own framing, under the delusive imagination that any mere opinion, speculation, doctrine, form or ceremony whatsoever, can of themselves constitute that spiritual building, in which the almighty and eternal JEHOVAH JESUS dwells, with all the blessings of his parental love, and the powers of his salvation! Whereas it must be very plain to every attentive reader, both of the Sacred Scriptures and of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, that the church of Christ consists solely of the humble, the upright and the obedient, agreeable to those words of the Lord, 'My mother and my brethren are these, which hear the Word of God, and do it,' (Luke viii: 21); and in another place, 'My sheep hear my voice,' (John x: 27); where to hear is to obey."

Such was this saintly man's idea of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem. So well did he understand the meaning and purpose of the



heavenly doctrines. So fully did he enter into and so thoroughly comprehend their large and catholic spirit. So clearly did he see that the New Jerusalem is not a visible body, and can never be identified, therefore, with any organization or sect. And scores of passages might be cited from Swedenborg, showing how fully his teachings sustain those of Mr. Clowes as here quoted.\* (See A. C., 402, 940, 8938; N. J. D., 95.)

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\* Although Mr. Clowes was quite correct in his understanding of the nature and whereabouts of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem, it is to be said in justification of the new and separate organization, that the state of nearly all the churches a hundred years ago, was such as to render that step almost if not quite unavoidable. So great was the prevailing intolerance and so intense the spirit of sect, that persons known to be readers and receivers of the New-Church teachings, would not be received into many of the churches of that day; and if already members, would be required to renounce their belief in these teachings, under penalty of excommunication if they refused. Though some of the old intolerance still lingers, it is far less intense than it was a century or even a half century ago.—B.

## CHAPTER II.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. EDWIN P. HOOD.

THIS distinguished clergyman, though classed with the English Independents or Nonconformists, was cordially welcomed to all orthodox pulpits in America at the time he visited this country a few years ago. He is the author of several interesting works—among others, "A World of Anecdote," "Lamps, Pitchers and Trumpets," and "Swedenborg: A Biography and an Exposition." This latter, according to the author's own testimony, was written purely in the interest of spiritual truth and true religion. A friend (as we are told in the preface) hearing that he was writing such a book, said to him: "Then, of course, you are a Swedenborgian." To whom he replied: "I am no more a Swedenborgian than I am a Bunyanist, a Howeist, a Bernardite, a Franciscan, a Moreist, a Behmanite, or a Lawite. The sayings and thoughts of all great and true men are precious to me; and I hope I can both receive them and retail them without parting with myself."

Mr. Hood may, therefore, be regarded as an emi-

nently independent witness in this case. He knew what the Old Theologies are, and could have had no conceivable motive in misrepresenting or disparaging any of their teachings. He had also read Swedenborg enough to pretty thoroughly master his system, or at least to know *what* he teaches on all doctrines of vital importance. What says this witness? We shall give his testimony on a few points only. Hear, first, his vindication of Swedenborg's perfect sanity—for some professedly Christian ministers have pronounced him a "monomaniac," and his theological system, "one vast, utter delusion."

"Sanity is the due exercise of our whole manhood—body, mind, and spirit—the frame, the intellect, and the will or affections; and it is obvious that this high sanity can only be in a state where sin, the great disjointer and deranger of humanity—sin, which is insanity, is excluded. But if we look at Swedenborg's career, we find all his life balanced and harmonized. If ever there lived a man who might claim to present to the world a completed being, he was the man." (p. 162.)

#### *HIS VIEW OF THE ATHANASIAN CREED.*

Of the Athanasian Creed, as accepted by most Christians and published in not a few prayer-books, Mr. Hood says:—

"The Athanasian Creed is a most astonishing affair. . . . We have ever been amazed at the boundless arrogance—the haughty, awful impudence of the thing—that any man should dare to say on so dark a subject so much more than God himself has said; should so, from the finite standpoint, close up and moat round the avenues of Infinite mercy and Infinite personality. Truly we may be very tender on such matters, but we cannot read it without a shudder; it is the embodiment of a faith working without love [*i. e.* faith alone]—a faith singing hollow words, rattling like the bones of a skeleton, without a heart. The Athanasian Creed is the feudal keep of Theology; it bristles from all its turrets with cruel spear-points; every word grins like an opening manchicolation; in it God no longer looks like the Father—Christ no longer looks like the Saviour—the Spirit no longer looks like the Comforter; it repels—it does not invite—like a stern old battlement of the Middle Ages; it is lonely and divorced from sympathy; it is so cleverly constructed—that castle of words—that it probably contains nothing that any sincere Christian in fact doubts, and yet, perhaps, not one in a million of all the saved could understand it—that Athanasian Creed; and it contains within it dungeons, racks, blocks, and stakes. It is a ruin, however; it has done something to bring indignation on the idea of creeds at

all. It is a tower with the drawbridge ever up; claiming to be the wicket gate of Christianity." (p. 249.)

*SOME CENTRAL DOCTRINES DISCUSSED.*

Then he comes to some of the central doctrines of Christianity; and here we have his confession touching both the Old and the New interpretations:—

"But it is now necessary that we direct some attention to those views of the Divine Being and character which more especially belong to the province of Revelation as unfolded in the pages of Swedenborg. . . . Oh, if men would but form their ideas of God from his Word for themselves, rather than on those darkening and blackened glosses by which, from age to age, even the best men have sought to obscure, or, seeking to make clear, have really obscured, the Divine Being!

"Thus the doctrine of the Trinity has, to our thought, been purposely and intentionally surrounded by obscurity. We have been angry with any *effort* made to roll away the clouds, and to present it as in truth it is in Scripture—plain, intelligible, rational, necessary. . . .

"Are we Polytheists? At least, are we Tritheists? . . . Do Trinitarians think of Three Gods?

Is there not in much of our Christian worship as gross a Tripersonality as in Grecian mythology, or in the Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva of Hindoo paganism? And have we not often noticed that in most of our prayers we do not treat the Personalities as equal? Our prayer to God the Father, is as to a Person quite distinct from and superior to the Son. We do not often in prayer address the Son at all. . . . It may be doubted whether we do not often use language we do not understand, when we speak of Christ as 'the gift of God.' When we implore Christ to intercede with the Father for us, we do in these phrases show that we entertain a sense of the inferiority of the second adorable Person; and it is the inevitable consequence of our teaching that it should be so." (p. 251.)

Then he proceeds to give Swedenborg's doctrine on this subject, with evident satisfaction and approval.

"Swedenborg devoutly believed in the Doctrine of the Trinity—not in three Gods, but in one God. . . . The Lord Jesus Christ is, with the Father and the Spirit, the One only true God. This is Swedenborg's great Faith." (pp. 251, 252.)

Again he says :—

“ It was Swedenborg’s idea of the Trinity, that it existed in one, as the Will, Understanding, and Energy—as Cause, Manifestation, and Operation ; and this is plain, however difficult any opposite method of interpretation may be. The Unity of the Godhead is a doctrine so dear to Christian minds—the Trinity has so often proved a stumbling-block to young believers, and a ground of contempt to sneering skeptics, that every one must hail a solution that may at once retain the grandeur and the intention of the mystery, and yet make it more plain to the understanding. We would be the last to reject Revelation on account of its mysteries : . . . but it would be madness to prefer the mystery to the sunlight, when the one streams through the heart and region of the other.” (p. 257.)

#### REGENERATION.

Mr. Hood then passes on to another central doctrine of Christianity—“ the great fact in human history called Regeneration.” And the following is his confession on this subject :—

“ The new birth is the everlasting puzzle, and the occasion of everlasting sneers and contempt to almost

all persons who have not known the great change—the birth out of Nature and above Nature—the birth, of which the birth and life of Jesus was a type and an illustration. . . . Swedenborg maintains the reality of this new birth. It is [as he explains it] just what it is by Jesus Christ declared to be; it is the birth of a new manhood beneath the old; it is the ingeneration of the divine Spirit of all Truth by its Author and Fountain; it is the inflowing of a new life, or life in a new degree and in new manifestation. This is the new birth—one of the most clear, beautiful, rational doctrines of our holy faith, in spite of all that superstition has done to encumber it with falsehoods; in spite of all that infidelity has done to bring it into odium, derision and contempt. . . .

“Regeneration, in the sense of our writer, is not a work of faith. Faith may be operative in producing it; but it alone can no more produce the New Birth, than the solving of a mathematical problem can create a planet; neither is it merely that change of life which may result from change of ideas and impressions, and from enlarged intelligence. . . . Regeneration itself, in the estimation of many writers and speakers, is not so much a fact as a shadowy and mythic event in human history. The reality has not been felt as Swedenborg felt it, by most writers. It has been the doubtful land of Theologic opinion per-



petually insisted on, and yet in few instances comparatively really realized." (p. 259.)

And then he quotes, with manifest approval, two or three pages on this subject from Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion."

#### *THE SACRED SCRIPTURE.*

Hear Mr. Hood's testimony in regard also to the written Word. He has a chapter on "Sacred Hieroglyphics" which he introduces with a legend called "the mysterious Lock," whose "application" he says, "is obvious." According to the legend, there was once discovered on the plains of Arabia, a Building of colossal size and grandeur, containing innumerable halls, galleries, and chambers filled with all beautiful and precious things. No one could enter that Building and thread its delightful but intricate mazes, without the Plan, which lay in a golden Chest or Ark guarded by a mysterious Lock. And thus the legend ran:—

"What Key would fit those wonderful wards? The Architect alone could give the Key. He had placed the plan and inventory within the golden Ark, reserving thus his own right over his own Building.

But the ambition of mankind set to work to construct keys innumerable; still the lock would not move. One bold and daring race, unable to find the key, sought to break open the Ark; they hammered on its sacred cornices of gold, from whence indignant lightnings shone and flashed; they beat upon the lock and sought to prize it, but it would not yield; and then as a last resource, they sought to steal the golden Chest, boasting that, as they had it in their possession, the whole of the Pyramid Palace must be theirs; and they covered it with their black cloaks and albs, and ran away believing they had it; but to this day unmoved and uninjured it lies in the centre of the Palace, and very amazing indeed it is to see certain of the robber race strutting through the out-courts of the Building, boasting, as they point to its walls, that it is all theirs. . . .

“Alas for us! We all know the Building—we have all walked through many parts of it. But who will find for us the sacred Key?—for it is said that when the Key shall be found, and the finder shall walk through the Palace with the Plan, every lamp, self-lighted, will blaze around the splendid rooms; the gates and pillars of precious stones—the Arabesques and Mosaics—will interfold and flash to and fro like living rainbows. . . . Oh that one would give us the Key!” (pp. 367, 368.)

And Mr. Hood believes that the great Architect has given to Swedenborg the Key to the sublime mysteries of the Word—to its deep spiritual meaning. He says :—

“ The Bible is written from Appearances and from Correspondences. How can the Book be at all understood unless this be considered? But in order that there may be some attempt at solution, let us attempt the analysis of the doctrine of certain Correspondences. We believe it will be found that, after a little study in reading the Scriptures, we shall learn to think not from the expressions, but from the hidden significations. Swedenborg removes the veil; and truly wonderful it is to find how, by this principle of interpretation, the most opposite passages of the Sacred Book are found to have consistency and coherence; the mind of the Book becomes more plain and clear. As it is, the unenlightened mind is compelled, in ‘hearing, to hear and not to understand,’ and in ‘seeing, to see and not perceive.’ What is the greater part of the Sacred Writings to most minds, but a tone—a sound without a meaning or a sense?” (p. 369.)

“ You may denounce Swedenborg as a fanatic, a dreamer, a mystic; but at any rate you must have his sacred piety and exalted aspirations in some homage, before whom the priest’s Breastplate, the Tabernacle

in the wilderness, the magnificence of Solomon's Temple, gleam out with meaning as well as lustre, receiving and reflecting light from the parables of our Lord, the harp of prophecy, and the city of the New Jerusalem with its twelve manner of stones." (p. 382.)

"Why did the Holy Spirit speak to man by images?—to perplex, to baffle, to confound? Surely not; but that the words might be seen to contain, as in an Ark, things more sacred than words alone can reveal." (p. 385.)

"Scripture has a literal writing and signification all may read—all may understand; and it is sufficient for the salvation and understanding of all. But there is a hidden writing—a name like that upon the 'white stone,' 'which none may read but those to whom it is given.' The Saviour in his words and parables declared this; it is the principle of the old Jewish services; it is the principle of Prophetic Writing; it is adopted by our Lord in his discourses, and evidently indicated in his miracles; and the canon of Scripture closes with a most wonderful illustration of it. It is a hand-writing we partly know. Why should we not accept any other aid which may yet further elucidate the meaning of a Book which, though it speaks plainly and clearly the words on which depends our eternal life, reserves much for the consolation of those who, with humble hearts, seek 'for the consolation of Israel.'

“There is a spirit as well as a letter in the Word of Truth. Have we not occasion to fear that our attention has in this age been wholly absorbed in the letter, until we have, in fact, quite forgotten, in many instances, the spirit?” (p. 384.)

#### *HOMOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY.*

Hear Mr. Hood's confession also touching the popular view of the nature of man, of the resurrection, of the value of what is called psychological science, and the light that Swedenborg has thrown upon these subjects.

“No other writer has so distinctly given the negative to the great delusion that the body is the man. The body is man's house; all its powers and faculties are but the organs of the soul; not modes of the soul's operation, but avenues through which it acts, and by which alone it can be apprehended or at all known. This is one of the greatest delusions man has to encounter and conquer; the connection of man with his body has to be more clearly known. . . . He allows his senses to impose upon him, and by and by abandons altogether the thought which ought perpetually to be his consolation and his life; namely, that his personality stands as far and as highly dis-

tinguished and apart from his body, as does his body from the house in which for a time *it* has *its* abode. It is a comforting idea that our mind is the master and the tenant of the deceased and dying house of mourning and of clay." (p. 290.)

"Psychology—the doctrine of the spirit, is well named; but often it has happened that the name has been the best part of the study. No range of thought has been more dreary or barren than this; none has been more frequently converted into a mere sciomachy or logomachy; spirit has had but little to do with the discussion. The professed Psychologists all weary us. How can it be otherwise than so? They compel us to follow over immense deserts of arid and sandy scientifics—the mirage haunting us, and beckoning in the distance a promise of satisfaction. 'Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!' The mirage fades like a phantom; our spirit finds no rest for the sole of its foot; 'tis a weary chase—through cloud and star-land with Berkeley, through the grim dreary mountain defiles with Hume, through the dry hard streets of every-day life with Reid, through the rainbowed chaos of Fichte and his contemporaries; and rest assuredly meets us nowhere.

"Truly Psychology, so called, has not introduced us to the spirits; but it has raised a score of Frankenstein monsters, horrible abortions, who crush us. When

we were yet young, our faith was in the Bishop; he set the spirit free from matter, but we did not see our way through the shapeless universe of which he flung back the doors. We recoiled from a world all ideas; it was as deathlike as a world all matter. Your psychological sciences are the graves of faith, or the very inns of infidelity.

“ . . . All the essays on Psychology we ever heard of, never introduced us to one spirit. They were a rotting chrysalis without the butterfly.” (pp. 300, 301.)

“ But Swedenborg boldly asserts that in every particular the spirit is a man after death as before; a shape cognizable, with emotions and passions, with mental powers and affections. . . . He is the only writer who asserts clearly, so far as we have seen, the nexus between body and soul, distinctly separating and yet conjoining them.” (pp. 302, 303.)

And Mr. Hood closes his chapter on Homology and Psychology with these words:—

“ The reader, we trust, will now see the character of Swedenborg’s investigations into the nature of man; and it will be seen while his conceptions are definite and distinct, they conduct neither to the vagaries of Hegel or Schelling, nor the cold but glittering Pantheism of Fichte, nor the lofty but dizzy

opium heights of Kant. Let the reader acquaint himself with his books—grounding himself in the doctrines and thoroughly understanding them—he will then stand on a ground from whence he may obtain a knowledge and ample survey of the opinions of other men; and he will find, we believe, that the confidence and repose felt from these, far transcends that which arises from the faith in any other system of mind. It is a faith that recompenses for the digging; and that is saying more than we dare to say of almost any system that has challenged our homage in modern times.” (p. 310.)



## CHAPTER III.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. HENRY B. BROWNING.

PERHAPS the strongest testimony which a minister can bear to the truth, value, and spiritual helpfulness of Swedenborg's writings, is his thorough study and hearty acceptance of their teachings, and his incorporation of them into all his pulpit discourses without naming Swedenborg or the New Church. This is what hundreds (and possibly thousands) of ministers in England and America are doing to-day—and have been doing for several years past. And they feel that under existing circumstances they are fully justified in so doing. They have studied these Writings, and have within themselves the testimony of the Spirit that they are what they claim to be—"from God out of heaven." They have examined them carefully and prayerfully, and in the light of Scripture and reason and human experience and all known truth; and they have found them to be in a high degree helpful to themselves, and have reason, therefore, to believe that they will be equally helpful to their people. But they know what an intense though

wholly groundless prejudice prevails against Swedenborg and his writings, and that the minds of many if not all of their hearers would be closed by an open profession of belief in his teachings. They therefore prudently—and, as we think, wisely—refrain from any mention of his name.

Of this class of ministers is Henry B. Browning, A. M., "Rector of St. George with St. Paul"—or was, twenty years ago—in Stamford, England. An interesting volume from his pen, entitled "*Words in Season*," was published in this country about twenty years ago, which has had a wide circulation, and been read with delight by some of the best people in every Christian denomination. It contains forty chapters wherein every important doctrine of the Christian religion is discussed in a plain and familiar manner. The author's views are presented on more than a hundred distinct religious topics; and while he never mentions the name of Swedenborg, he was known at the time this work was published to be an affectionate receiver of the New doctrines; and the author is in perfect accord with the great Swede's teachings on every subject he discusses. The most pronounced Swedenborgian would not ask for a work more completely in harmony with Swedenborg's teachings, or more unexceptionable in both its doctrine and spirit, than "*Words in Season*." We will give a number of

extracts from this work, that the reader may see how different its teaching is from the Old Theology, and how much more reasonable, Scriptural, and spiritually helpful.

*HOW TO THINK OF GOD.*

“Whenever we would think of God, we should think of Him in the glorified Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This will give definiteness to our ideas of Him. Many think of God as of an infinitely diffused substance without form. Thus the thought of God is dissipated, like the sight of the eye when one looks upon the boundless universe. All this vagueness is removed when we think of God as a Divine Man, infinite in Love, Wisdom and Power, and present by his life-giving effluence in all creatures and all things. The deep desire of every earnest soul is to know God—‘Show us the Father and it sufficeth us.’ And to the soul so yearning to know God, the Saviour answers, as He answered Philip: ‘Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.’ John xiv : 8, 9. The attempt to think of God as He is in the infinite abysses of his own nature, must ever be futile. The mind becomes confused in the effort to soar so far above the necessary limitations of human thought.

“But in Jesus, ‘God manifest in the flesh,’ we have a revelation of God exactly suited to our wants. The vagueness of belief in God, which prior to the incarnation was inevitable, is now abolished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ‘God in Christ’ is so brought down to our spiritual state, that He can be a subject of rational thought and an object of rational love. The incarnation was such an accommodation of God to our condition as to bring Him within the limitations of human thought and affection. It was the most wonderful of all Divine accommodations to man’s state. To know Christ is to know God, and to love Christ is to love God; not God afar off in the infinitude of his Divine nature, incomprehensible by human thought; not God as an abstract idea taking shape in the necessary anthropomorphism of our own minds; but God incarnate—‘Immanuel, God with us.’

“To angels in heaven as well as to men on earth, God, who in Himself is invisible, is manifested in Christ. They think of God and see Him as a Divine Man, who created them in his own image and likeness, and who Himself descended into the natural and material plane of his creation, and was manifest in the flesh.” (pp. 203, 204.)

*THE GLORIFICATION OF CHRIST.*

“The great fundamental doctrine of the New Testament is this: In order to redeem and save mankind, God took upon Himself a human nature, which was born of the virgin Mary; through victories in temptation, this human nature became more and more fully one with the Divine nature; until, perfected through sufferings, it was filled with all the fullness of the Godhead, and exalted far above all heavens to be the everlasting medium of Divine influences to angels and men.

“This process, by which the human nature of Christ was made one with the Divine which dwelt within it, is termed the *glorification* of Christ. It consisted in the opening of his human capacities, by the continuous removal of all inherited conditions that could limit or resist the influx of the Divine life; and in the continuous descent of the fullness of the Godhead from the inmost even to the ultimates of the perfected humanity, until the human consciousness became altogether one with the Divine. The real operator was God working in the human nature in which He was incarnate; for Jesus received continually from the Divine Father who dwelt in Him, the power both to will and to do.” (p. 239.)

*THE DIVINE INCARNATION.*

"At the time when the Lord appeared on earth, 'the enemy had come in like a flood;' the powers of hell had risen to such a height that moral freedom was well nigh lost. Life from God, coming to man through false and evil media, was perverted. The hereditary propensities of mankind, entailed through so many sinful generations, were becoming increasingly corrupt and increasingly powerful. To rescue man God needed to bow the heavens and come down. To encounter the enemies of man, He needed to hide Himself, to veil his Divinity in man's nature, to be 'Immanuel, God with us'; so that the Everlasting Father might also become the Prince of peace." (p. 157.)

*WHAT IS IT TO LOVE GOD?*

"Love to God, in its highest spiritual significance, is the love of his Divine perfections—the love of what God is. We are to love God, not merely for his benefits toward us, but for his own sake—for the sake of those love-worthy qualities which constitute his Divine character. Hence genuine love to God is the love of goodness and truth; for these in their essence and origin are Himself. Whoever loves goodness and truth loves God; and he loves God

just in the degree and manner in which he loves goodness and truth. And the command to love God above all things is equivalent to this—that man's love for what is good and true must be the great controlling principle of his life.

“Love to God, in this sense, has a necessary tendency to conform us to the image of God. True love, based on appreciation of character, is *imitative*; it seeks to resemble its object. Love is the most formative thing in the world, the most powerful in removing what is uncongenial to its nature, and in assimilating all things to itself. By loving goodness we increase in goodness; by loving wisdom we increase in wisdom; by loving holiness we increase in holiness; by loving these as qualities in God, we become like God.” (p. 233.)

#### THE INFLUENT LIFE OF GOD—ITS LAW.

“The Lord himself is continually in the desire and endeavor to communicate to man the life of his own love. The actual communication of this life is limited, not by the Lord's willingness to impart, but by man's capacity to receive. It is a law of man's nature that he is receptive of good affections from the Lord only so far as their opposites are removed. The Lord alone is able to remove man's evil loves; but He can do

this only so far as man in freedom resists them in himself, and abstains from evil actions as sins against the Lord. In proportion, then, as a man from this motive mortifies his selfish and worldly loves, ever looking to the Lord for help, the love of God and the neighbor will be shed abroad in his heart and be manifested in his words and deeds." (p. 237.)

#### HUMAN HAPPINESS—HOW ATTAINED.

"Love is richest in joy when we seek to manifest it in deeds of love. Happiness, whether here or in heaven, is found in the effort to make others happy. The law of delight is the law of use—of doing good to others. By bringing us into the good and orderly state of tenderness, mercy, charity, the Lord brings us into blessedness. Hence the doing of good works is immediately as well as prospectively profitable unto men.

"It is true, however, that in the beginning of the regenerate life, obedience springs from a sense of duty rather than from inclination. We have to restrain ourselves from doing wrong, and to compel ourselves to do right. The reason of this is—*the obedience of faith precedes the obedience of love*. But doing good from a sense of duty is the first step toward doing good from the love of goodness. The habit of obeying the



Lord from the desire to be and to do good, opens the soul to a Divine influx which will gradually change the character of our motives. The obedience which at first seemed hard, will, when the love of goodness becomes our ruling principle of action, be found a joyous service. We enter into harmony with the Lord, and find that 'his commandments are not grievous,' and that 'in keeping of them there is great reward.' " (p. 172.)

#### P R A Y E R.

"Prayer is not needed to inform the omniscient Lord of our wants; 'for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.' Matt. v: 8. Neither can it avail to change the purpose of the All-wise, or to make the All-loving more gracious and willing to bless than He was before. But though prayer does not effect any change in the Lord, yet it does effect a most important change in man. In true prayer the face of man's spirit is turned toward the Lord, and the mind and heart of the petitioner are opened to receive from the Lord the blessings adapted to his state.

"Besides making us receptive of grace which the Lord is ever willing to bestow, there is in prayer itself a reflex benefit. We are the better for our prayers, not only *through* them as a means of receiving bless-

ings from the Lord, but *by* them on account of their own influence upon ourselves. This benefit is twofold. First: because true prayer reacts upon ourselves in confirming and increasing those spiritual graces which are exercised in prayer and find expression in its words. Second: because in true prayer we hold communion with God, and the effect of such communion is to conform us to the Divine image. It is an invariable principle operating with the certainty of cause and effect, that man by worshiping becomes assimilated to the object of his worship.

“Prayer will be ineffectual without practice—unless accompanied by our own endeavors to realize the blessings for which we pray. By prayer we seek from the Lord grace to overcome falsity and evil, and to grow in knowledge and in goodness. It is a *means* of grace, and must not be mistaken for the end. Of what use is it to pray for patience, if we do not try to curb our impatience? to pray for purity, if we continue to indulge in uncleanness? to pray for charity, if we foster unkindness and neglect to do charitable deeds? *Prayer for Christian graces will be ineffectual, unless at the same time we resist all evil as sin against the Lord.* While a man from this motive strives against evil, prayer is a most efficacious means of attaining Divine help. It brings the soul into a state of humility, of

self-distrust, of constant looking to the Lord for strength and guidance." (pp. 207-209.)

*PREPARATION FOR HEAVEN.*

"We become fitted to enjoy heaven by learning to delight in heavenly things. The process by which this preparation is effected is regeneration. It consists in the reception of heavenly love and wisdom from the Lord; in the formation in man of a truly heavenly character, so that all the aspirations and delights of the soul shall become heavenly. Heaven would be only a place of misery to those who felt no joy in heavenly delights. Indeed it is easy to conceive that, to those who are destitute of truth and goodness and confirmed in falsity and evil, heaven would be even more painful and horrible than hell. To the drunkard, the licentious, the covetous, the revengeful, the society of the temperate, pure, generous, and merciful is ever a source of discomfort and even pain. They desire even here to flee from such, and to associate with their like. Death, which is merely the putting off of the material body, makes no change in a man's ruling loves. How needful, then, it is that we should be made 'meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'" (p. 119.)

*THE TRUE WORSHIP.*

“The joys of the redeemed in heaven do not consist merely in vocal praises of the Most High. Every act they perform is, indeed, an act of worship and adoration; because everything they do is prompted by love to God, is directed by wisdom from God, and is done for the honor and glory of God. True worship, either in heaven or on earth, does not consist in vocal prayer and praise alone. We worship the Lord most worthily when we delight in doing his will. Our life is a life of praise when we live to the honor and glory of the Giver of all good gifts, who operates within us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Whatever be the nature of the service we may there have to perform, there can be no question that every use and function will enhance our happiness and deepen our gratitude and love to the Lord. Heavenly light will enable us the better to understand the ways of our Creator and Saviour; heavenly love will fill our ever-enlarging affections; heavenly uses will employ our ever-increasing powers. The Lord’s joy will then be in us, and our joy will be full. However actively engaged in heavenly ministrations, the service of the Lord will be perfect freedom; our work will be truly rest, because truly delightful to our souls.” (pp. 60, 61.)

## THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

“The purpose for which our talents are entrusted to us is, *that we may be made mediums of blessing to others*; and the good Lord has so ordered, that *our endeavors to be of use to others react upon ourselves*. The Lord is a true economist in all his works. He so orders everything that it shall subserve many purposes. The soul that does good to others grows in goodness. He that is a medium of blessing to others, is himself blessed thereby. Hence selfishness is folly as well as sin; for while it prevents us doing good to others, in the same degree it prevents our doing good to ourselves.

“In regard to spiritual gifts, the more we communicate, the more we shall receive. *The law of increase is the law of use*. The Saviour teaches this great law in these words: ‘Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.’ (Luke vi: 38.) This Divine law rules in regard to spiritual things, both on earth and in heaven. We must minister because we have received; and we must minister that we may receive more abundantly. In ministering to others we enter into the true order of our life. Our life

comes from God who is the universal *Giver*. It must therefore impel us to *give*; it must prompt us to words of help and deeds of use. If we are not conscious of this impulse, it is because our life, although received from God, has become perverted in our reception of it. The more it retains of the character of its Divine original, the more must it impel us to act in a God-like way, and *give*. The Saviour's greatness and oneness with God was shown in this, among many other things, that He came 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' He was the greatest of all, because He was the servant of all. In seeking to resemble Him, we enter into harmony with the Divine purpose, which is *that all may be blessed, and that they may realize their own blessedness in seeking to bless each other*.

"We must, however, communicate to others for *their* sakes, and not merely to serve our own ends. While it is true that they who give are enriched, that they who teach learn, that they who help grow strong, that they who bless are blessed; yet if in giving we only think of our prospective gain, if in blessing we only think of the richer blessing we shall receive, the apparently unselfish act is really a deed of the most refined and intense selfishness. The selfish motive vitiates the efficacy of the seemingly unselfish act. By the universal law of reaction, that very act only

tends to confirm our own selfishness. The love of use, and not the love of self, should be the leading motive in all we do." (pp. 181-183.)

#### *SPIRITUAL LIBERTY.*

"Life from God is so imparted that it seems to us as if it were independently our own. This is the case with natural life, and it is the case also with spiritual life. While in very truth 'it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do,' yet it seems to us that both the will and the power to do are our own. The Lord thereby secures to man a spiritual individuality in the good that he does; He thus preserves in him spiritual liberty at the same time that He imparts to him spiritual good. The new nature which prompts the Christian to do good, seems to him as truly his own, as did his former merely natural life. The promptings of the new heart and the right spirit seem to him as fully the spontaneous impulses of his own will, as did the prior promptings of his unregenerate mind. Thus faith in the Lord as the Source of spiritual life, does not interfere with man's liberty. The angels who realize with fullest conviction that they live only by influx of life from the Lord, are conscious of the most perfect freedom." (p. 177.)

## THE ELEMENTS OF ANGELIC LIFE.

"*Love, wisdom, and use* are the elements of angelic life. In heaven, where the laws of Divine order are perfectly obeyed, love and wisdom received continually from the Lord, are ultimated or find their embodiment in *use*. We may know but little of what are the employments of angels; but of this we may be sure—that for those of his creatures whom God fills with love, He provides others that may be loved; and for those whom He endows with superior wisdom, He provides others that may be taught. Wisdom is infinite only in God. In all created intelligences wisdom can exist only in a relative degree, as more or less. That the Lord should make the wiser angels mediums of instruction to the less wise, does not lower our conception of the felicity and perfectness of heaven. Surely it may be thought that new-coming spirits fresh from earth, must need and may profit from the loving instruction of their elder brethren of the skies. The felicity of heaven, it may well be believed, does not consist merely in the reception of 'the manifold grace of God' by each angel for himself, but also in 'ministering the same one to another, as good stewards' thereof.—The delight of the natural man is to *get*; the delight of the spiritual man is



to *give*. The truly beneficent man is the happiest man." (p. 184.)

*ANGELS—AND THEIR FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN.*

"One thing our experience may teach us: whenever we are actively engaged in the uses of charity, from the love of doing good, we are most richly and consciously blessed. The reason is, that we are thereby brought into association with those angels of the Lord's kingdom who are in the love of similar uses; and those angels are made to us mediums of blessings from the Lord by imparting to us of their affections and delights. Thus by the law of spiritual affinity, which draws together those who are animated by similar affections, the angels, though unseen, associate with us and fit us for the higher uses of the eternal world. In this way they are 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.' Heb. i: 4." (pp. 184, 185.)

*GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATION.*

"The moving cause of creation was the Divine Love. The Lord did not create the universe for his own sake, but because He desired the existence of beings in his own image and likeness, whom He

might make happy from Himself. Hence the ultimate Divine purpose in creation, is the formation of a heaven out of the human race. Thus earth rightly regarded is the seminary of heaven—the scene in which man begins to exist, and in which he may develop an angelic character to fit him for the higher uses and the more exalted felicities of the eternal world.” (pp. 245, 246.)

*DISCRETE DEGREES IN CREATION.*

“There are three discrete degrees of substance—viz.: the Divine, the Spiritual, and the Natural; the substance of God himself, the substance of the souls of men and of the spiritual world, and the substance of the natural universe and of all things therein. In the order of creation, the natural was discreted from the spiritual, and the spiritual from the Divine. The Divine can act upon or into the spiritual; and the spiritual can act upon or into the natural; but by no process of transmutation or refinement can the natural become the spiritual, or the spiritual become the Divine. By this doctrine of discrete degrees of substance we avoid the fundamental error of Pantheism, while adopting the great truth which it so imperfectly expresses. The Creator is not confounded with the creation, for the substance of the universe is not continuous from God. Yet God is truly the original and

all-pervading life—animating the spiritual degree of substance, which is the indwelling and actuating principle of all material things." (pp. 246, 247.)

*A SPIRITUAL AND A NATURAL WORLD.*

"God is the Great First Cause of all things that exist. *The spiritual world exists in the natural as a cause in its effect.* The spiritual world is a world of mediate causes acting in the natural world, but deriving all its power from the great First Cause, from whom it originated and by whom it continually subsists. Matter itself, the ultimate created substance, is dead and inert; and all forces by which its inertia is overcome, and all the active properties which it seems to possess, have a spiritual origin. *All natural objects exist from and are actuated by corresponding spiritual essences, to which they stand related as the body of a man to his soul.* Hence all things in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms of nature have their antitypes in the spiritual world, substantial spiritual entities corresponding in all particulars of organization with their material types." (p. 247.)

*ORIGIN OF THINGS NOXIOUS.*

"This doctrine of influx from the spiritual world accounts for the existence of inverted or disorderly

creations in the material universe. None of the noxious things that exist on this earth were created by the Lord in the beginning, but they are all from hell. For, by the law of spiritual causation, the affections and thoughts of the inhabitants of the spiritual world give birth to corresponding spiritual creations, which form the objects and scenery round about them. It is through the operation of this beneficent law, that the members of each heavenly society are surrounded by the beautiful and useful objects (spiritual, of course) in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, which are in harmony with their mental and moral states. But the same law of spiritual causation prevails equally in hell, where, consequently, the inhabitants of each infernal society see their falsities and evils projected into corresponding external objects, which are inversions of the orderly creations of the heavenly world. These spiritual inversions, flowing into the world of nature, become embodied in material substance and originate the various types of animals, vegetables, and minerals injurious to man." (p. 248.)

*DEATH AND RESURRECTION.*

"Man in this world is a dual being; consisting of a spiritual and immortal part—his soul; and of a natural and mortal part—his body. The soul is the real man,

that for a while is tabernacled in the flesh. It is the soul which hears, sees, feels, thinks, desires, speaks, and acts. The body is no more than a marvelous material organism which lives from the soul, in which the soul dwells, and by which the soul remains in the natural world, and takes part in its concerns.

“When man is said to die, it is only the body which really dies. The reason is, that the body is no longer suited to be a dwelling-place for the soul. The marvelous and mysterious links which previously united the soul to the body are broken. The soul takes its flight from the body; and as its life departs, the body dies. The body being dead, truly means that the soul has left it. Now that its life is gone, the body, subject to the wonderful processes of natural chemistry, will waste away, decompose and mingle with the dust. ‘Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,’ is, therefore, properly said when the body is placed in the grave.

“But the real man, the soul, is not destroyed by quitting the body. It remains a living, thinking, loving, conscious being, and dwells in the spiritual world. If the man has been good, pious, and holy, if he has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and has striven to keep his holy commandments, he will, like Lazarus, be ‘carried by angels into Abraham’s bosom;’ that is, he will go to heaven. He will enter into and dwell in the heavenly mansions about which Jesus spake

when He said: 'In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.' (John xiv: 2.) He will join the Church triumphant, the 'innumerable company of angels'—'the general assembly and Church of the first born which are written in heaven'—'the spirits of just men made perfect.' Heb. xii: 22, 23.

"In that state of happiness the man is as truly a man as when he dwelt on earth. He is now a spiritual man, possessing a spiritual body, dwelling in the spiritual world. The soul, when separated from the material body, is in the human form. Hence when Moses appeared to Peter, James, and John, ministering to the Lord in the mount of transfiguration, although his material body—'the earthly house of this tabernacle'—was dissolved, having been buried 'in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor' (Deut. xxiv: 6), more than fourteen hundred years before, yet Moses was still in the human form. By death man ceases not to be human. We may be sure that he possesses in the other life all that is essential to his existence as a man—memory, consciousness, intelligence, and affection, in a spiritual body adapted to the spiritual world. In the case of those who have been truly members of the Lord's Church, servants and disciples of the Saviour, there can be no question that their faculties are purified

and exalted far beyond any perfection attainable on earth. Their capacity for joy is enlarged; the joys they experience are beyond all comparison higher and holier; and of the increase of their blessedness there shall be no end." (pp. 58-60.)

#### THE JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH.

"The judgment after death is not merely a judicial act by which every one is at once assigned his final abode, but it is a *process* of exploration and development by which the exteriors of the spirit are gradually brought into agreement with its interiors; by which the genuine internal character is brought forth to view; until the Lord's words are fully verified in each individual case: '*There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known.*' Luke xii: 2. The design of the judgment is thus to bring the externals of human character into exact conformity or correspondence with the inner life; to abolish all artificial, assumed, and merely apparent distinctions among men; and to establish on the basis of internal and spiritual realities the conditions under which they will thenceforth exist, and the associates with whom they will thenceforth consort.

"The Lord is truly the Author of this judgment; God is 'the Judge of all.' The means by which this

judgment is effected, is an influx into the soul of the light of Divine Truth from the Lord, impelling every one to think, speak, and act under the influence of his ruling love, and thus revealing both to himself and others the true quality of his life. In this world every man is able more or less to conceal his real character, and in his words and actions to assume an exterior conformable to the laws of social order by which society is governed and preserved. The power of hiding from others our interior thoughts and feelings during our probation here, is a merciful arrangement of Divine Providence; for it not only enables us to form a basis of natural goodness on which may be built the spiritual superstructure of a heavenly character, but it likewise permits the associations of this life to proceed in an external way of peace which would otherwise be impossible.

“If the light of Divine Truth from the Lord so shone into the minds of men in this world as to impel every one by word and deed to disclose his inner thoughts and feelings to his fellow-men, abolishing thereby all those merely external restraints, courtesies, and attachments which now subsist, society would be dislocated. A new distribution of mankind would immediately ensue; those only who resembled each other in internal character would associate; the good would have fellowship only with the good, and



the evil only with the evil. In such case, instead of being as now a mixed state—a sort of common ground or mutual meeting-place where both the good and the evil can come into contact and maintain social and amicable intercourse with each other, the world would become a theatre where all the good were assembled in one place—a *heaven*; and all the wicked in another place—a *hell*." (pp. 228, 229.)

*HELL—ITS PUNISHMENTS MERCIFUL:*

"There is no contradiction to the harmony of the Divine attributes in the fact that Divine Justice provides for the punishment of sin. It is the highest mercy to punish the sinner whom nothing but punishment could restrain from wickedness. The more certainly that wickedness is disorder and that disorder is productive of misery, the more certainly that obedience is order and that order is productive of happiness—the more certainly true it is that mercy must seem cruel to be kind. Punishment is not an end of itself; it is but a means to an end; and that end is altogether merciful. *Punishment which is merely vindictive and without merciful ends in view, has no place in the Divine government.*

"Even the punishments of hell are no exception to the operation of the Divine Mercy. The notion of

hell as a place of arbitrary punishment eternally inflicted by an implacable Deity for *past* acts of wickedness committed during the sinner's life on earth—however apparently supported by the letter of Scripture—is utterly untenable. There is indeed punishment in hell ; but it is such punishment for *present* acts of wickedness as is *repressive and restraining* only, and thus altogether merciful. God sends no one to hell ; but all who go down to that world of death, go there of their own choice, drawn to their associates in evil by the attraction of their ruling loves. Those passages of Scripture which, in the literal sense, seem to assert that God commands the wicked to be cast into outer darkness and the tormenting flame, are accommodations of language to the natural ideas of men. In so far as it is a law of Divine order that in the other world, as indeed in this, men shall desire and strive to be with their like, and shall seek for and prefer to abide with such—in that sense God commands the consequence in instituting the law.

“But the law is merciful, both in its purpose and in its operation ; for by virtue of this law all the associations of heaven are formed ; and even in the associations of hell the lost spirit is less miserable than he would be in heaven. The suffering of the infernals is a dread reality, the necessary consequence of their

disorderly and evil state: but the Divine mercy is present even in hell, operating through the inevitable law by which evil punishes itself, to restrain them from the excess of evil which would aggravate their misery. Fear of punishment is the only restraining motive in beings confirmed in evil; and the Divine mercy, ever seeking to limit the raging of their lusts, and thus to save them from increase of suffering, uses that motive as the only means to this beneficent end." (pp. 223, 224.)

#### APPARENT TRUTHS IN SCRIPTURE.

"There are two classes of statements in the letter of the Word—those in which the truth is openly and absolutely expressed; and those which convey the truth, not as it is absolutely, but as it *appears* to the minds of men in a low moral and intellectual state. We may conveniently style the former *genuine* and the latter *apparent* truths. The necessity and advantage of this distinction will be seen in applying it to the descriptions in the Word of the moral character of God.

"The purpose of the existence in the Bible of *apparent* truths in relation to God, is clear—viz.: to reach minds in a low moral and intellectual condition, who can think of God in no other way. Although

the understanding may be elevated above the will, so that we can see the excellence we have not realized in ourselves, yet all men, more or less, picture to themselves a God in their own image; so that, in this sense it is true: 'With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful; with an upright man Thou wilt show Thyself upright; with the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure; and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward.' (Ps. xviii: 25, 26.) Only so far as the Divine characteristics are revealed *in* us, can they be spiritually discerned. While others may have a speculative knowledge of the Divine perfections, only the loving can really know God in his Divine love, only the wise can know Him in his Divine wisdom, only the holy can know Him in his Divine holiness. As men grow up into the Divine image and likeness, in the same proportion their perceptions of the Divine nature deepen and become exalted. To the wicked God appears what He really is not—terrible, jealous, full of wrath; while to the good He appears what He really is—altogether loving, gracious, full of compassion, the Divine Father, whose love is deeper and more tender than that of a woman for her first-born. Being born again, they see the kingdom of God; being pure in heart, they see God; being lifted into heavenly light, they recognize their Father in heaven. By accommodating the verbal revelation of Himself

to the states and capacities of men, God has provided a means by which all may be reached, and by which all may be enabled to believe. The lower view will give place to the higher, as men, through faithfulness to the light they have, become more and more receptive of the higher." (pp. 113-115.)

*APPARENT TRUTHS IN NATURE.*

"In the book of Nature as well as of Revelation, we are compelled to distinguish between genuine and apparent truths; and in the sun, which is a symbol of the Lord, we have a very close analogy strikingly illustrative of the subject before us. The sun, which is gloriously refulgent in an unclouded sky, appears red and lowering when obscured by fog; but there is no change in the sun itself. It is thus with the unchangeable God under the different aspects in which he appears to men. Seen through the clear spiritual atmosphere of love and truth, God is love, immutable love; seen through the fog and mist of evil, He appears to be angry, wrathful, at enmity with man. When man changes in his spiritual condition, and from his changed condition thinks of the Lord, it seems to him as though the Lord had changed.

"To conclude from appearances that the Lord changes, is as great a fallacy as to conclude from appear-

ances that the sun moves around the earth. The absolute truth is that the sun in respect to the earth is stationary; the sun only appears to move, and the real change is in the earth itself which seems to be so immovable. The sun changes not; the Lord changes not. The sun seems to change, waxing and waning in brightness and in heat; now coming nearer, then retiring farther from us; now effulgent in the noon-tide, then altogether gone in the obscurity of night. God, in like manner, seems to change; now shedding forth light and love, then frowning and angry; now very near to our souls, then far removed from us; now causing the soul's noontide of love and glory, then leaving the soul to mourn his absence during its dark, cold night. The change of the earth's place and position is the real cause of the apparent changes of the sun; and variation in man's spiritual condition is the real cause of changes which seem to take place in God. God is unchangeable; the changes take place in us. He has hung his unchanging image in the natural firmament to be an unalterable witness to his universal operation, to be the very analogue of the light and heat, the truth and goodness, which He continually pours out on all mankind. The appearance of change in the sun does no injury to him who believes that the appearance is a reality. The time may come when the reality will be known and the appearance will be explained. So the apparent truths of

the Bible in relation to God, if the highest of which the mind is capable, do no injury to him who believes them. They only become hurtful when he who has once believed them, is thereby confirmed in his rejection of the higher truths." (pp. 215-17.)

And much more might be quoted from this precious volume, similar in character to the foregoing, but it is needless. We have shown, by brief extracts, what were Mr. Browning's views on a large number of different religious topics—some of them vital, and all of them important and interesting. Who cannot see that the views here presented are totally different from those commonly taught in the churches of to-day, or to be found in any of the generally accepted authorities? You may search the entire religious literature of Christendom, back to the days of the apostles, and you will nowhere meet with any such views. Yet every one of them is to be found distinctly set forth in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg; and it is the highest testimony that an Episcopal minister could give to the truth and value of his doctrinal teachings, to publish so many of them as Mr. Browning has in this delightful volume, with no allusion whatever to the great Swede or his writings.\*

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\* Mr. Browning's volume, "Words in Season," from which the foregoing extracts are taken, is for sale by the Swedenborg Publishing Association, Germantown, Pa. Price 75 cents, post-paid.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. T. M. GORMAN.

**M**R. GORMAN was an English clergyman in good and regular standing in the Protestant Episcopal Church at the time he wrote "The Athanasian Creed and Modern Thought." And although he makes no mention of Swedenborg in this work, he was known to be a devoted student of his writings and a cordial receiver of their teachings. And in this work, from which we make liberal quotations, he not only shows his thorough understanding and hearty acceptance of all the fundamental doctrines of the New Church as revealed through Swedenborg, but places them in contrast with the old and still widely received doctrines, and expresses his deep conviction of the need of a new system of theology widely different from the old.

#### *A NEW THEOLOGY NEEDED.*

In his comments on the Athanasian Creed, Mr. Gorman gives his view of the utter inadequacy of the Old Theology to meet the present demands of thinking



men, and his belief that a New Theology is a pressing need of the times; and he more than intimates that a new system has already been provided, and is accessible to all who have any desire for it. He says:—

“A blind and *unconscious* repetition of doctrinal summaries must inevitably tend to deaden the higher moral sense, and becloud the intellectual vision with which man has been endowed for the perception of things spiritual and heavenly. This is too plain to need proof. When, on the other hand, expositions of the Christian faith embodying genuine spiritual truths from the Living Word, are presented in such a form that the intellect is able to grasp their meaning; . . . such expositions may be compared to the hem of the Lord's glorious garment of Divine Light: and when touched, if one may so say, by the hand of a living and intelligent faith, spiritual, yea Divine virtue goes out from them. For them there is a harmony of faith and reason. Truth is seen in its own heavenly radiance. There is, in some sort, an actual communion with heaven, the native abode of all truth.

“If the teaching of the Church is to be believed and *practiced*, it must be shown on proper and sufficient evidence, to be *true*—intrinsically reasonable in

the highest and purest sense. No appeals, however subtle and eloquent, to a blind and unreasoning faith, will much longer suffice to prop up the crumbling superstitions of past ages. The old arguments and persuasives which once sufficed to establish and perpetuate popular religious convictions, have no longer any influence on the great mass of intelligent men. We breathe an entirely new scientific, moral, intellectual, and religious atmosphere. New and unexpected lights have broken in upon the human mind, filling it with wonder and delight. The true character of numberless phantoms of the imagination, which in every region of human research had held undisputed sway as real existences, has now been laid bare. A *blind* faith in the supernatural is no longer possible. The numerous and wonderful revelations of science have, so to speak, furnished new eyes to the understanding, and cleared the intellectual horizon far and wide. . . .

"The time is approaching when a complete readjustment of current theological views will be, to some extent, possible. For many a century the teaching of the Churches has been, on the highest subjects of human thought, miserably in disaccord with reason and fact.

"It is clear that the Christian faith must now be maintained and spread by new arguments and *new expositions of its first principles*. The old modes of defence, like the old conceptions, are fast becoming

obsolete. Once more as in the old time, the dead must be left to bury their dead. An entirely new effort must be made by all who love truth in sincerity, to welcome its advent from every quarter and in every form.

“The path of sound theological opinion in the Church is beset by two obstacles of giant magnitude. There is, on the one hand, a desolating *Tritheism*, and the phantasms to which it necessarily gives origin; and on the other a naturalistic *Atheism*, the subtle poison of which induces on the mind into which it finds an entrance stupefaction and torpor touching things intellectual and spiritual. The *remains* of Christian truth and life in the Church can be saved only by the revindication and reassertion—in a form adapted to the new state of thought—of the foundation doctrine of her worship, A DIVINE TRINITY IN THE ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD.” (pp. 109–113.)

#### THE DIVINE TRINITY.

And what is this Trinity as held and taught by Mr. Gorman? Very different from that commonly received and taught in the Church of England (with which he was in external communion), but precisely that taught by Swedenborg throughout his writings. The author states it thus:—

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"The three general *Essentials* of every man, are soul, body and the united *working* of both. In like manner in the ONE GOD there are three—and only three—general *Essentials*; Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (p. 135);—meaning, clearly, that the Divine Trinity finds its image and best illustration in man's soul, body, and their united *working*—these being the three general *essentials* of every individual."

And in another part of his book, he says, in reply to one who had virtually confessed that "the mysterious and adorable doctrine of the Holy Trinity" is not a doctrine to be comprehended or explained:—

"To admit, *in an age like the present*, even by implication, that the Church possesses no *intelligible* doctrine of the Divine Trinity, is virtually to surrender the first principles of the Faith to the enemy. The sooner the rulers of the Church become fully alive to the extreme importance of this plain fact, the better and happier will it ultimately be for all concerned." (p. 106.)

GOD—A DIVINE-HUMAN PERSON.

And who, according to Mr. Gorman, is "the one living and true God?" Here is his answer to this question:—

“Jesus Christ alone is God and man, that is to say, GOD-MAN, or a DIVINE-HUMAN PERSON.” (p. 135.)

Again, he says:—

“At the head of all doctrines stands *one* which good and true Christians of all communions acknowledge implicitly in every act of obedience and love to God their Saviour, but which as yet is little known among theologians from any clear, definite and rational idea—viz.: *that the glorified Human Form*, in which our Lord Jesus Christ now reigns as God over all, blessed for ever, is DIVINE—not merely human and finite as commonly supposed, but in all the fullness of meaning of the terms, DIVINE and INFINITE. This truth *ought* to be the primary doctrine of all Christian Churches.” (p. 100.)

And once more:—

“This idea, then, of the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ as a Divine-Human Person [an idea everywhere prominent in the writings of Swedenborg], is pre-eminently the noblest, the purest, the most exalted, the most influential for good, that the human mind by its highest reach can ever conceive. It *conjoins*, really and consciously, the Infinite and the finite, the Creator and the creature, as the ray of light

connects the eye with the sun. It serves to lift, in part, the veil of that *inner world* which has been so fully revealed, and yet so dimly discerned in Holy Scripture." (pp. 160-162.)

And many times in this same work does Mr. Gorman speak of Jesus Christ as the DIVINE MAN, and the only proper Object of worship, saying in one place: "Although He be Divine and Human in one DIVINE-HUMAN form—that is, GOD-MAN, yet He is not two beings or 'persons,' but one Christ, or Messiah, *in One Divine Person.*" (p. 148.) And he reckons it as "the *chief* of all doctrines" and the very foundation of the Christian Church, "that JEHOVAH, *the Being of beings*, is to be worshiped in his Humanity, that is, in the GOD-MAN, the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (p. 154.)

Again he speaks of "the *supreme* Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ" as "an *essential principle* of the Christian faith, wanting which a Church is a Church only in name." (p. 18.) The very doctrine distinctly taught by Swedenborg over and over again, and by no one previous to his time; and its fundamental importance is insisted on by Mr. Gorman as emphatically and earnestly as by the great Swede himself.

Furthermore, Swedenborg tells us why it was necessary that God should assume our natural human-

ity, and what was accomplished by it, and why He could be tempted when on earth, and how the process of glorification went on. And every student of his writings will recognize a striking similarity—the precise idea and almost the very language—between his teachings on this subject, and the following from Mr. Gorman's book :—

“This victory over the powers of spiritual darkness, this glorification of his *human* Essence and Form, was effected by means of temptations, the mysterious and dread character of which was revealed to man only in part, under the veil of the letter—temptations which he endured in that infirm humanity derived from the virgin mother. *This alone could be tempted.* The Divinity, as such, cannot be tempted in any wise. These temptations were overcome by successive steps continually unto the end. THE PASSION OF THE CROSS was the last and direct temptation ; but it was also the full, perfect and eternal victory.” (p. 163.)

#### THE THREE ESSENTIALS.

Mr. Gorman favors the honest efforts of earnest and good men “to render the common confession of Christian belief, and the rule of Christian life, as brief, simple and comprehensive as possible, consistently

with conserving the essentials of Christianity." And he tells us what he regards as the essentials:—

"These essentials may be said to be three in number: 1st. A belief in the SUPREME DIVINITY of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2d. A belief, in some real and *bona fide* sense, in the INSPIRATION of the Word of God. 3d. A belief that LOVE TO THE LORD AND LOVE TOWARDS THE NEIGHBOR, constitute the essence and life of the church in the mind of man—in other words, the kingdom of heaven within him."

And the following is what Swedenborg gives as the essentials of the church:—

"There are three essentials of the Church: an acknowledgment of the Divinity of the Lord, an acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word, and the life which is called charity. Every man's faith is conformable to his life, that is, his charity. From the Word he knows what his life ought to be, and from the Lord he has reformation and salvation. If these three had been held as the essentials of the Church, intellectual dissensions would not have divided it, but would only have varied it, as the light varies colors in beautiful objects, and as a variety of jewels constitutes the beauty of a kingly crown."—*Divine Providence*, n. 259.



*THE DOGMA OF FAITH ALONE.*

Speaking of what he terms "the irrational dogma of 'Salvation by faith alone,'" Mr. Gorman says:—

"The leaders in most of the Protestant sects, in establishing this dogma, destroyed, as far as it was possible, a principal foundation of the Christian Religion, by separating faith from charity; when, nevertheless, it is a most certain truth of the Christian Religion that no genuine living faith can possibly exist when separated from charity. Faith separate from charity is no faith; for charity is the life, soul and essence of faith."—*Preface*, p. xvii.

The very same doctrine, again, that we find in Swedenborg repeated a thousand times, and very often in the same words employed by the writer.

The innumerable falsities, too, which have corrupted Christianity and darkened the church, Mr. Gorman traces to precisely the same source as does Swedenborg—viz. : to a misunderstanding and falsification of the written Word. He says:—

"Misinterpretations and perversions of the letter of Holy Scripture, arising from the commonly received canons of Biblical interpretation, have gradually and

insensibly led to the adoption of most erroneous and absurd views concerning the Divine essence and character of the one living and true God. To a similar source may be traced numberless other whimsical notions and pernicious persuasions, originating in human pride and ambition, plainly contradicting the teaching of Scripture, and at variance with the dictates of sound reason."—*Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

#### HIS VIEW OF SACRED SCRIPTURE.

Mr. Gorman is also in perfect accord with Swedenborg in his view of the nature, and of the right method of interpreting Sacred Scripture.

"Holy Scripture," he says, "cannot be rightly interpreted apart from a previous admission, in general terms at least, of its *Divine origin* and *spiritual inner meaning*."

"The Scripture has in general *two* meanings at least—one natural or literal, the other spiritual; with this difference, however, between them—that the *spiritual* is the genuine and unchangeable meaning, which is clothed by the natural." (pp. 40, 44.)

Again :

"The 'remonstrances' of those who advocate 'one and only one meaning,' are, in Divine Providence,

destined to be forever unavailing. The letter without the spirit—the ‘original meaning’ real or supposed, without the spiritual and living sense—is like a body without a soul. . . . The time will come—to some extent *has already* come—when students of the Divine Word will search its pages neither for astronomy, geology, nor any other natural or mere worldly science; but for that which alone it was by infinite Wisdom provided to teach for all ages—the spiritual truths which pertain to man’s regenerate life, and the eternal laws by which the Lord’s Kingdom is governed in heaven and on earth. The time is at hand when an attempt to impose on the *free study* of the Word, the carnal and blinding bondage of ‘the letter that killeth,’ will be regarded as the offspring of either hallucination or wickedness.” (pp. 138, 139.)

#### THE CHURCH AND CHURCH UNITY.

In respect to the Church and Church Unity, as well as the nature of true internal worship, see again how entirely Mr. Gorman agrees with Swedenborg—expressing himself in almost the very same language :

“The Lord’s Kingdom on earth, in other words, his Church, must, from the circumstances of the case, exist in various external forms; and have diverse

conceptions of Revealed Truth. Although each separate religious communion professes to derive its tenets from Holy Scripture, and individuals, even in the same Christian society, differ widely in their opinions; still all this need be no barrier to Church Unity, provided Christians be at one *in willing and doing what is good and right*. . . . The notion of Papal Unity, and every imitation of it in the Reformed Churches or elsewhere, is not only chimerical, but also tends necessarily to the violation of Christian truth and charity.

“There is a mere outward formal worship; and there is also an inner worship ‘in spirit and in truth.’ The votaries of the former are hypocrites; and in the Divine sight such worship is vile and abominable. Those who cultivate the latter are children of God; and are to be found in every form of Christianity—nay, *even among the Heathen*. Who these are individually, and to which class they truly belong, is *certainly* known only to Him who knows what is *in man*.” (pp. 99, 100.)

And Swedenborg says—and more than fifty times does he repeat the same in substance :—

“In respect to the Lord’s Kingdom on earth, that is, in respect to his Church, the case is this : that,

since it derives its doctrines from the literal sense of the Word, it must needs be various and diverse in respect to doctrines,—one society professing one thing to be a truth of faith because it is so said in the Word, and another society professing another thing for the same reason; and so on. Consequently the Lord's Church will differ in different places; and this difference will exist, not only between large societies or general bodies of the Church, but sometimes between individuals in each society. Nevertheless a difference in the doctrinals of faith is no reason why the Church should not be *one*, provided there be unanimity in *willing what is good and doing what is good.*"—*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 3451.

"Worship is both internal and external"—"If love and faith are not inwardly in prayers and adoration, there is no soul or life in these latter, but only a certain external like that of flatterers and pretenders, who, we know, are not pleasing even to a wise man in the world. To *do according to the Lord's precepts* is the way to worship Him truly; yea, this is true love and true faith."—*Ibid.*, n. 10, 143.

And speaking of the church, Swedenborg further says: "It is everywhere, both in those kingdoms where the [Christian] church is, and *out* of them, where the life is formed according to the precepts of

charity." (*Ibid.*, n. 152.) And elsewhere and often does he say that "no one but the Lord alone knows the internal states of men," or *who* belong to his true church.

#### VIEWS ACCEPTED BY INTELLIGENT PEOPLE.

And so Mr. Gorman, throughout his book, when he gives us his own views, shows that he fully accepts Swedenborg's doctrine on the several subjects discussed; and that he knows they are not the views commonly held and taught in the Church of which he is a recognized minister. Yet they are views which intelligent people who are not much confirmed in falsities, readily receive. This is plain from his Preface, in which he tells us that "the leading points" in the work from which we have here quoted, were presented in a discourse that he delivered on two separate occasions. And he adds:—

"The method adopted on both occasions, of treating a most difficult and almost totally neglected part of our Divine Service, called forth numerous and unexpected expressions of cordial approval from intelligent and earnest-minded parishioners who happened to be present, and also a strongly expressed desire to see the discourse in print. The writer, for obvyious reasons, hesitated as to the propriety of com-

plying with this solicitation; but the perusal of a debate on the same subject, which recently took place in the Upper House of Convocation for the Province of Canterbury—a Report of which was published in the leading Church newspapers—removed at once all scruples in the matter. It was then, apparently for the first time, publicly declared by authority, that the *explanation of the Creed was an open question.*”

The doctrinal teachings of Swedenborg are at once so reasonable and Scriptural, that (provided the seer's name is withheld) the laity or common people always receive them with great delight. So it was at the Lord's first advent. “The common people heard Him gladly.”

And here we desire to add, that it is greatly to the credit of the Protestant Episcopal Church in England, that her clergy are permitted to read and preach the doctrines of the New Church as fully and plainly as did the ministers from whose writings we have here quoted, without disturbance and without threat or fear of excommunication. If all the Christian denominations in both England and America would adopt and pursue the same wise and truly Christian policy, what an impulse would be given by such freedom and catholicity to the spread of the new religious truth, and the extension and upbuilding of the Lord's Kingdom on earth!

## CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF REV. E. H. SEARS, D. D.

**M**OST, if not all, of the American people who feel any interest in spiritual or religious subjects, are doubtless more or less familiar with the writings of Rev. Edmund H. Sears. But probably few of them know how long or carefully Dr. Sears had studied the writings of Swedenborg, or how heartily he accepted their teachings on all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. He sometimes, though rarely, mentions the name of Swedenborg in his books; but the principles and spirit of the illustrious seer are manifest in every chapter.

Dr. Sears was a personal acquaintance and much valued friend of the present writer. Our intimacy commenced in the Divinity School at Cambridge, where we were together for two years, though not in the same class. And not long after my graduation, and when I had become deeply interested in Swedenborg's writings, I wrote him, telling of my new or threatened theological departure, and urging him—as he prized the privilege of saving his friend from the



theological gulf that was yawning—to read the books I had just read, and give me his candid opinion of them. He promptly acceded to my request; and then commenced a correspondence between us which lasted for more than forty years, till near the close of Dr. Sears' earthly life—sometimes, however, with pretty long intervals between our letters. In this correspondence he related to me much of his spiritual history—telling of the difficulties he encountered and the progress he made in his study of the new revealings. Without going into any detail of this history—for that is not necessary to my present purpose—I will give here brief extracts from two or three of his letters, which will show how fully confirmed he finally became in the doctrines of the New Church as revealed through Swedenborg, and before he published his principal works. In September, 1842, he wrote:—

“I continue to read the writings of Swedenborg, and will tell you just how I stand in regard to them. The general doctrines of Swedenborg commend themselves entirely to my understanding. I mean by the general doctrines, that concerning the spiritual world, the resurrection, inspiration, regeneration, and the doctrine of life. The doctrine concerning the Lord, I see nothing to object to so far as I am sure that I understand it.”

He then proceeds to state some difficulties which

he encountered in connection with this doctrine, and of which he had found no solution in any of the New-Church writings.

*HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW DOCTRINES.*

But he continued to study Swedenborg, and his difficulties were gradually overcome. And in a letter some three or four years later (1846), he writes: "The doctrine of the Lord is glowing in my mind like a noon-day sun; and I cannot doubt any longer that Swedenborg was the appointed medium of a new dispensation." And in the same letter he announces his full reception of the doctrines of the New Church as unfolded in the writings of Swedenborg.

"You will judge by this," he says, "what I suppose you knew before, that I am a full receiver of the New-Church doctrines. I told our parish committee (he was then pastor of the Unitarian Society in Lancaster, Massachusetts) last spring, that I had become so much of a New Churchman that I must resign my office; against which they earnestly protested, saying that the people, knowing my views, were anxious I should remain. Notwithstanding their kindness and toleration of my views, and the New Church sentiments and sympathies which exist among a portion of them, I do not see how I can remain."

This was written at a time when Dr. Sears considered the New Church as an organized and visible body, distinguished from all others by its new doctrines. But I had come, through a careful study of Swedenborg's teachings, to see that this was a mistaken idea; and that all who are in love of the Lord and in charity toward the neighbor are internally associated with the New Heaven, and are therefore members of the New Jerusalem, whatever may be their external or earthly church relations. And believing that Dr. Sears could perform a greater use by continuing in his denomination, I advised him to make no change in his ecclesiastical relations, but to remain where he was so long as he was permitted to do so, and his services proved acceptable to his people. He did remain, and subsequently changed his view of the nature and whereabouts of the New Church, as appears from the following extract from one of his later letters:—

“I wish I could see you and have a long palaver with you, such as we may hope to have when we get into the other world and breathe the clearer and more bracing ethers. You know I used to quarrel with you about the ‘visible church.’ I believe I understand you now, and fully agree with you on that subject.”

BECOMES SENIOR EDITOR OF A RELIGIOUS  
MONTHLY.

For several years Dr. Sears was one of the editors of the *Monthly Religious Magazine*, published in Boston, "an independent journal having no connection with any denomination;" and during his editorial career he encountered some criticisms from the Unitarian "organs." In response to one in the *Christian Register*, he did not hesitate to say, that when invited to assist in conducting the *Religious Monthly* "he avowed explicitly to the proprietor that he was thoroughly a New Churchman in theology, and as such must appear in the pages of the magazine." And in his response to a criticism in *The Christian Inquirer*, he openly acknowledged his belief in the fundamental doctrines of the New Church as unfolded and taught in the writings of Swedenborg. Taking care, in this response, not to compromise the Junior Editor, he tells his readers to "bear in mind that 'We' means the Senior Editor, in the first person singular, who compromises his associate in none of his confessions of faith," and says, among other things:—

"We believe in a New Church, the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven, to gather into itself all that is good in all the sects in Christendom,

and out of the present hubbub and chaos to form the city of our God ; and that the New-Church system of interpretation evolves its three primal doctrines with logical precision, and in heavenly clearness. These doctrines are the Divine Humanity in the Lord Jesus Christ ; the plenary inspiration of the Word of God, and a life of charity in conformity therewith ; God as one Divine Person ever present with his Church as the glorified Christ ; his Word all-perfect as a rule of faith and practice, and a life of obedience to its teachings of justice and love.

“ We believe that this Church of the Future, organizing around these three primal truths, is becoming the Church of the Present, and is to become so more rapidly evermore ; that over the clang of opinions, and the waters of strife, it hovers like Noah’s dove, and finds here and there a resting place ; that its blessed infusions descend into all the sects, Unitarian and Trinitarian ; and that in its coming power and effulgence the good and the true everywhere will turn towards it, and be gathered into it like doves that fly to their windows.”

And in the same magazine a few years later (March 1865), Dr. Sears said :—

“ Swedenborg’s theological system has a unity of its own, and an organic connection with Christianity,

such as avouches itself the genuine development of the Christian system. His cosmology, his theology and his pneumatology are the Christian revelation breaking into more full and rational light from the seals of the letter which had kept and preserved it."

*HIS THREE PRINCIPAL WORKS.\**

The principal works of Dr. Sears and those by which he is best known to the reading public, are, "Regeneration," "Foregleams and Foreshadows of Immortality," and "The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ." Neither of these works was written until after he had studied and cordially accepted the New-Church doctrines; and although Swedenborg's name is mentioned only five times throughout all these volumes, and no quotations are made from his writings, yet every chapter in these books is filled to the brim with the principles and spirit of the New Christianity. They are thoroughly New-Church books; and while they are read and admired by the best people in all the denominations, no class holds them in higher

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\* A volume of sermons published since his removal to the spiritual world, entitled "Christ in the Life," and containing more than twenty of Dr. Sears' poems, is one of the richest, most delightful and instructive collections of sermons to be found in our language. And although Swedenborg is not named in them, they are thoroughly New Church in spirit and in doctrine.

esteem than do the members of the organized or professed New Church. Few religious works published in our country have had so extensive a sale as these, or have given so great satisfaction and delight to intelligent Christians of the various denominations; and none, it is believed, have received such unqualified praise from the periodical press both secular and religious. To give the reader some idea of the character of Dr. Sears' works, we will quote a number of pages from three or four of them—only adding that every chapter in the works quoted, is not at all inferior in its spirit, teaching, or grace of diction, to those we have selected. The following is from his treatise on "Regeneration."

*THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

"The spiritual nature implies two things: A spiritual world which exists out of man, and a faculty in him to put him in connection with that world, and apprehend its objects. It implies the adaptation of one to the other. The physical nature includes the faculties of sensation: but the faculties of sensation imply their objects—the world of sights and sounds and fragrance; of skies, fields, and waters; a world which puts the physical nature in connection with itself, and unfolds all the sensuous powers. Even so there is

the same correlative fitness of the spiritual man to a spiritual world, or else the term *spiritual nature*, as applied to human beings, would be a term without a meaning.

“ Let us now approach the subject of the Divine nature so far forth as to deduce the doctrine of Divine influence. There are two sources of evidence that lie open to us whereby this doctrine may come clear and living to our minds. There is a sure and safe analogy, and there are the vivid descriptions of revelation.

“ Man is created in the image of God, and so in man the Creator has abridged and copied out his own attributes. Were it not so, we could have no communion with the Eternal Father, any more than the beasts of the field or the clods of the valley. We could not even form any conception of the Divine nature, for we could get no ideas answering to the terms which describe it, and God would be unrevealed in the human and finite images which set him forth. For instance, if there be a trinity in God, there would also be a trinity in man, that likeness which a pencil of rays out of his own nature has made of itself and projected into time. And just so far as it fails of realization in the likeness and the copy will the words that describe it be *words* and nothing more. And so of the Holy Spirit. In man must we find the



analogy that sets forth its nature, else the terms that describe it will be sounds that float idly upon the air.

“We describe the human being from two points of view,—man as he *is*, and man as he is *manifested* in his doings;—man in his own person, and man in the spirit that is breathed out of it; in his intrinsic nature and in its daily and hourly outgoings; in his essential being, and in the functions it performs in the economy of life; in the powers that lie within him, and in the influence that goes out of him, and creates the moral atmosphere, the insphering life that affects all things that lie within it. There are those whose persons we have never looked upon, but whose influence abides with us, transforming our characters, and permeating all our trains of thought and feeling when least we are thinking about it. Indeed, man in his finite degree may be said to create a world out of himself. He is furnished with the rough material, the primal chaos, so to say, which he acts upon and transfigures by his own effusive energies. Nature and society furnish the material which he works with plastic power, and he leaves on them the prints of his genius, and imbues them with the colorings of his mind. According to what he *is*, is the quality and amount of the virtue that goes out of him, and he cannot cease to impart

his peculiar life unless he sinks into the lethargy of death. His hand, feeble though it be, holds the 'golden compasses' of the poet, by which he marks off a portion of the chaos that lies about him; and this circumference is filled, and to some extent is changed, by that life that never ceases to go out of him. Some modern philosophers would have us believe that its manifestations are more subtle than ordinary senses have ever detected, and that all things about him, when least he is conscious of it, are imbued and imprinted with his genius.

"Indeed, this same distinction holds of all created things,—things as they exist in their own form and essence, and as they impart their virtue and perform their use in the grand economy, from the modest flower that rises by the way-side and exhales its sweetness on the ambient air, to the sun out of whose orb comes the never-ceasing waves of glory that break on the outermost limits of the universe. Not a tree nor a leaf—no, not a clod nor a stone—out of which virtue of some kind is not always going. Not a substance which has not its attractive or repellant forces, and which does not impart either health or poison. Could we see into the life of things, we should know how they act and react upon each other in such wise as to elude our clumsy analysis, and that

that grandest conception of the imagination had hardly outrun the sober truth of philosophy :—

“ ‘There’s not the smallest orb that thou behold’st  
But in its motion like an angel sings,  
Still choiring to the young eyed cherubims;  
But while this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it.’

“Ascend we now to the august conception of the Holy Spirit of God. The Divine Being exists in one infinite and glorious person, but out of that person comes the life that pervades the universe, and constitutes the latent principle out of which all other forms of life do blossom forth. It is the affluent energy that creates all souls in its own image, and which by never-ceasing effusions would make them beautify and grow toward its own perfections. Falling into mute and insensate natures, *they* are only moulded into the passive and unconscious images of the Divine wisdom, beneficence, and beauty. But falling into the natures of free and rational agents, and freely and rationally received, it produces love, wisdom, holiness, making man the active and conscious likeness of the supremely Good and Fair. Hence man returns the love he receives, and hence his *communion* with God. Free and spiritual beings may receive this influence in more full or more feeble measures, and so among them are all gradations of spiritual life. The

sensual and the sinful grieve and quench the spirit. But it is received in more beatific measures among the inner ranks of saint and angel, and yet more by those inmost ranks that do always behold the face of the Father :—

“ ‘ The circles in the circles that approach  
The central sun with ever narrowing orbit.’

“ Conceiving the true doctrine of Divine influence to be of primary importance, we must ask the reader now to put this conception of the Holy Spirit in contrast with some other views, that it may stand out with due prominence. We put it in contrast with the idea that the Divinity is an impersonal spirit that pervades humanity, or a blind unconscious force that rolls through nature. The idea of God is not to be confounded with that of the spirit which he sheds abroad. We know of no spiritual influence which is not the outbreathing life of a living person. We know of no spiritual power which is not the attribute of a conscious being. Out of man and above man, out of nature and above nature, is the Divine Person, around whom centre all the splendors of the Godhead, but from whom is that effluence of light and love which pervades the whole circuit of being, and makes every atom glow with his omnipresence. ‘ Do not I FILL heaven and earth ? saith the Lord.’

“Again, we put it in contrast with the separate personality of the Holy Spirit, as we have not a doubt that this latter doctrine is the source of much that is anomalous in the prevailing mode of spiritual nurture. For if the Holy Spirit is a person that comes and goes between man and God, his advent will be hailed by tumults of rapture, his departure and absence will be bewailed as the era of desolation and mourning, his return will be sought by mystic rites and agonizing conjurations; the wildering fancy will see the signs of his return in its own wandering lights and irregular frames; the favored families which he visits will be pointed out, and the families which have been ‘passed over’ will seem abandoned to perdition. The churches will increase rather by periodic agglomerations than by homogeneous and perennial growth. There will be the alternation of chills and fevers, not the consciousness of God’s abiding spirit, always given, always immanent, and whose life is ever to be unfolded in the crowning virtues and graces of the Christian character.”

*ITS GENERAL AND SPECIAL INFLUENCE.*

“Man lives in two worlds at the same time, one of matter and one of spirit. Not more surely do the external senses open outward and downward, and put him in communication with material things, than a

finer sense opens inward and upward, through which come the idea of God and tidings of immortality. Not more surely do his sensuous faculties bring into his ear the sound of waters, and over his brow the breath of breezes, than his spiritual faculties admit to his soul the aura of heaven and the still and awful beatings from the heart of God. 'What nation or race of men can be found,' asks a heathen writer whose pages are more alive with spiritual ideas than much of our Christian literature,—'what nation or race of men can be found, which have not without any teaching some preconceptions of Deity, some idea of the subject by which the mind is *preoccupied*, and without which there could be no questions and reasonings about it? There must be divinities, for we have thoughts of them which are inseminated and inborn.'\* So he will have it that the primal truths are not the discoveries of man's painful logic, but they roll in upon him from the all-informing Intelligence, and to perceive them he has but to listen and to pause. At any rate, we are shut in to one of two alternatives. We must assume that all the disinterested virtues, all godlike sentiment, and the ideas of God and immortality and the divine law, which are found outside of Christendom, are what man has evolved out of his own

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\* Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I: 16, 17.

reason, independent of divine aid, and so he can be wise and good of himself, or else we assume that God is never without a witness in the hearts of all his rational creatures, and that the Eternal Word is the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. We take the latter alternative, in company, as we think, with the Evangelist and the Apostle, and we say, as Erasmus did after reading Cicero on duty and immortality, 'I am so affected that I cannot doubt that the breast whence such things proceeded was in some way occupied by the Divinity.'

"But while the New Testament writers assert this immanence of God's spirit in man, they use the words Holy Spirit in a more restricted sense, and as describing a special influence. The Saviour, on the eve of withdrawing his personal presence from his disciples, gave promise that he would send the Comforter, the spirit of truth, to guide them into all truth and bring all his teachings to their remembrance. Up to the hour of his ascension, they were ignorant of the nature of his kingdom, and the truths of Christianity lay dead in their memories. But after ten days had passed away, and while they were assembled at Jerusalem in expectation of some new tokens from on high, the promised influence came. God's spirit swept through their souls like rushing breezes; the truths that lie dead in their memories are blown into flame, their

powers of utterance are unloosed, and such is the new light within that it seems to play around their persons like lambent fire.\* This was the commencement of a new dispensation of the spirit, which ever since has been enjoyed by the Christian Church just so far as she has observed the condition of its reception. Yes, it was the great purpose of Christ in coming into the world to prepare the way for this new advent of the Divinity in the human soul. It was to remove all obstacles in the way of God's access to humanity, that He, who is always coming, might be always received.

"Now it is important to observe, that this new Divine influence differs in degree, though not in kind, from the universal action of God in man before described. Ever and everywhere the hindrance to this action is the sin and the ignorance of man, the dark and baleful cloud formed from exhalations out of his own heart, and hanging between him and the Divine glory. But for this, God would inundate our souls every hour with the warmth and the splendors of noon. Precisely here was the consummation of the mission of Christ. He came first with a dispensation of truth, and the dispensation of the spirit was the necessary consummation. He penetrated the darkness that brooded over the mind, and God shone

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\* Compare John xx : 26 with Acts ii.



without hindrance into it. And so the Church in the day of its purity appeared in an age of darkness, like one of those refulgent spots which lie upon the landscape under a riven cloud, and which on either side are flanked by the shadows flung from its wings.

“All those passages of Scripture which describe the operations of the Divine Spirit, whether as a general dispensation to human nature, or a special dispensation to the Christian Church, are in strict harmony with the deductions of analogy. True, there are passages in which it is personified, but it is personified in just the same way as is every attribute of God,—his Word and his Wisdom, his Mercy and Truth, his Righteousness and Peace.\* In its operation, it is always represented as the effluent life of God. Take its current phraseology, being ‘filled with the Holy Ghost,’ ‘baptized with the Holy Spirit,’ and try to annex the idea of a person, and the understanding is overwhelmed with confusion. Take the whole Pentecostal scene, where the spirit descended into the minds of the Apostles, and appeared around them like the play of nimble lightnings, conceive of it as a person, and your conception becomes perplexing and monstrous. But think of it as an influence from the one Infinite Person which imbathed their souls with its tidal fragrance

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\* Ps. lxxxv : 10.

and light, and all is clear and rational, and in close accordance with the facts of Scripture and analogy.

"The new dispensation of the Holy Ghost, introduced through the mediation of Jesus Christ, is a topic to which we shall return when treating of the means of regeneration. What we now observe is, that it is the same Holy Spirit, the effluent life of God, of which all nations and ages have had some perception and experience. But by the mediation of Christ, it was made more operative in human redemption. Both the general influence and its special adaptations to the human condition imply a nature in man receptive of the gift."

#### *SOME PRESS NOTICES OF "REGENERATION."*

"A fresh, vivid presentation of an important theme—all the more valuable as the utterance of one who has thought deeply and felt profoundly about it. The reader will find in these pages no dry discussion of a hackneyed subject, but familiar truth presented with beauty of diction in a singularly felicitous and impressive manner, and possessing a fascination which will win his attention from the beginning of the book to its close. . . . The three volumes ('Regeneration,' 'Foregleams,' and 'The Heart of Christ') together are a valuable contribution to religious and theological literature, and one which any man might be proud to have made. As now published, they would form most acceptable additions to the library of any Sunday-School, parish, or clergyman."—*Boston Evening Transcript*.

"Mr. Sears' volume on 'Regeneration' is one of the profoundest and most exhaustive treatises on that subject extant. The way in which he unfolds the laws of our inner life in the orderly process of

spiritual development, will be a revelation to most of those who read it for the first time."—*Arthur's Home Magazine*.

"A work full of the deepest and most nourishing spiritual truths—truths never more needed than they are at the present day and hour. Among devotional works it stands in the front rank; and alike in the sweetness of its spirit and the beauty of its language, it commends itself to every sincere Christian. . . . It is a good book to have by one. Its frequent perusal and study can hardly fail to enrich the spiritual life and lead to a firmer faith and a larger charity."—*The Christian Register*.

"We wish every one of our readers to purchase and read this book. If they are not satisfied that their money is well spent, and their time well devoted, and their hearts made better, and their minds enlightened, then we will not recommend another book for the perusal of the public."—*Christian Inquirer*.

"Never, we venture to say, has the subject of regeneration been treated in a manner at once so profound, philosophic, exhaustive, logical, and Scriptural, as in this charming volume."—*New Church Magazine*.

### THE DIVINE HUMANITY.

"What, then, are the conditions which the Divine Sacrifice requires of us? Faith,—faith in God, not as a mere abstraction, not as a sovereign who only threatens you with the punishment of hell, but as a Being whose love you wound, and whose mercy you grieve, with every act of disobedience. Never does a man see his sins in their true character till he sees them so opposed to the Divine Nature that in every one of them his Lord is crucified anew. Never will the wrong done to his brother appear to him in its

true light till he looks up, and sees a Divine Sufferer who says to him, 'Because you have done it unto him, you have done it unto me.' Never is repentance anything but a selfish fright and fear of punishment, never is reformation anything but an outward conformity, till we look up, and see through our tears the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Never is the Divine Mercy anything to us but a cold proclamation of pardon, till we receive it as a Mercy which has bled under wounds that we have inflicted. But, when it is thus received, we enter into the heart of it; and the sense of forgiveness is indescribably profound and tender; and we enter into the Divine meaning, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.'

"And only then do we enter into such communion with God, and become so far forth partakers of His nature, that our faith in Him gives us the heart of flesh, and the morality and charity that are filled with the throbbings of His love. Paul worshipped God as a Sovereign, after the straitest and most rigid of rituals; and he was very much like the God he worshipped, hard and unrelenting. But he met, one day, one who appeared out of the bending heavens, and told him, 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: I am the one you are slaying.' And the flint all melted out of him; and he became full of the spirit

of the Lamb of God, and tender-hearted as a child. So only God takes your sins away. His promises may bribe you into virtue, His punishments may keep you from sinning with your hands; but only through the Lamb of God He will take away your sins, melt them clean out of you, and make your souls beat with the throbbings of His own Divine Humanity."—*Christ in the Life*, pp. 168–170.

"FOREGLEAMS AND FORESHADOWS OF IMMORTALITY."

The author tells us in his introduction to the "Foregleams," that "this work was written at the request of the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, but in the wholeness of freedom which they have allowed;" and he "commends the argument to the attention of the candid of all parties in the Church, who would see the light of the heavens turned more brightly and warmly into the sunless valleys of the earth, where thousands watch for the morning."

It is not easy to make a selection from a work of more than forty chapters on an interesting and sublime theme, where all is so beautiful, rational, and Scriptural. So we take at a venture—partly on account of its brevity—the chapter which might not inappro-

priately be called "The nature of Heaven and of Hell," but to which the author has given as a caption the familiar and appropriate title of—

*"HOME."*

"Heaven and hell are the opposite conditions of humanity. In the former, God is supreme; in the latter, self. In this natural sphere they are mingled and interfused, and they could not be separated without destroying the framework of society. This condition of things must needs be, in a preliminary and probationary state, based on external relations and material interests and pursuits. We have seen that the necessary result of the resurrection will be to bring on the crisis, or the judgment-time, and that the necessary result of the judgment will be to resolve humanity into its elements, and separate the wheat and the tares when the reapers come to the harvest.

"But what is heaven, and what is hell? It is not so difficult to answer these questions, when once possessed of the truth that their elements are bound up and waiting within us. We shall dwell now, however, more exclusively upon the former, because it is a more welcome theme, and because if we know what heaven is, we shall know also its opposite, without attempting to evoke its awful imagery.

“We know of no subject so practical as this. The whole business of the present life, with all its discipline of labor, sorrow and joy, is to prepare and ripen us for heaven; and if it shall not do this, life will be a miserable failure. But how shall we prepare for it, unless we know what we are to prepare for? How can we travel unless we know the point of the compass toward which we are steering?

“Let it not be said that we have not data, and very distinct ones, too, from which to reason. If heaven and hell are not places to be entered by locomotion, but states of being to be evolved out of man, then they are already in man, and so our souls are prophetic, and through them we have an opening into the wonders of immortality. You will always find that one's notions of heaven correspond to his own spiritual state. They are his idea of the supreme good. Examine that, and it will show you precisely your spiritual position,—just as the traveller knows his latitude by looking at the north star and noting its distance above the horizon. What would you have, if your most ardent desires were gratified, and your loftiest ideals were actualized? Suppose you stood at the fabled wishing-gate, what is the petition you would send up? What are the suspirations that go up from the profound within you? What sort of a world would you make for yourself, if you could have every-

thing your own way, and embody around you your own best imaginations? Answer these questions honestly, and your idea of heaven is defined to you, and you will see whether it be carnal and selfish, or spiritual and pure.

“Hence it is important that our idea of heaven shall correspond to the reality. It is our idea of the supremely good and fair, always shedding its lustrous beauty on our toilsome road, to cheer and gladden us along the climbing way.

“Dismiss from your thought at the beginning the idea that all the departed saints are to be gathered into one assemblage for unceasing worship, and that you are to be merged in that vast multitude. Remember that all the past generations outnumber the thousand millions that are now upon the earth. What would you be in such a great mob of saints, hoarse with hal-lujahs? Descend into your heart, and you will find there a deep and unquenchable instinct,—one which belongs to the spiritual nature,—which death, therefore, cannot quench, but which it rather sets free for a more unreserved enjoyment of its objects. It is the instinct of home. It is this which determines human loves and sympathies around special points and centres, and forbids ever the notion of a formless multitude. It is this which will determine every soul to its special place by quick and unerring affinities, just as



the matter of the vast and shapeless nebulæ determined around innumerable points of twinkling flame, till the whole became thickly studded with stars.

“There is one grand motive, love and obedience to the Lord, which rules in all regenerated hearts ; but it has a thousand modes and forms of manifestation, according to each one’s mental and moral structure, special tastes, habitudes, and affections. It is so here ; it will be so always. The instinct of home is simply the drawing together of souls most alike and congenious around their own special centre, that there the ruling love may have the fullest gratification and nourishment, and from that centre radiate in most delightful exercise for the good of others. Two or more minds toned alike, and acting as one, from a common centre and for a common end, make up the idea of home. It is so now, it will be so always. Let the instinct of home be destroyed, and man would be utterly demoralized, or hopelessly insane. His life becomes aimless, and he wanders in spiritual vagabondism, he knows not whither or for what. The animals have not this instinct except, so far as they reflect it from man, and are drawn by him within its influence. It is his by eminent endowment and prerogative. Hence the peculiar and utter loathsomeness of those crimes which are committed against it,—which either disturb the unity of home or soil its

purity ; for the lusts that tend to this destroy the very image of humanity, and break it in pieces under the hoofs of the most swinish pollution.

*"Our home is always where our affections are.* We sigh and wander, we vibrate to and fro, till we rest in that special centre where our deepest loves are garnered up. Then the heart fills and brims over with its own happiness, and spreads sweetness and fertility all around it. Very often when the eyes are closing in death, and this world is shutting off the light from the departing soul, the last wish which is made audible is "to go home." The words break out sometimes through the cloud of delirium ; but it is the soul's deepest and most central want, groping after its object, haply soon to find it as the clogs of earth clear away, and she springs up on the line of swift affection, as the bee with unerring precision shoots through the dusk of evening to her cell.

"How admirable are the arrangements of Providence by which he gradually removes the home-centre from this world to the other, and so draws our affections towards the heavenly abodes ! We start in life an unbroken company ; brothers and sisters, friends and lovers, neighbors and comrades, are with us ; there is circle within circle, and each one of us is at the charmed centre where the heart's affections are aglow, and whence they radiate outward upon society.

Youth is exuberant with joy and hope, the earth looks fair, for it sparkles with May-dews wet, and no shadow hath fallen upon it. We are all here, and we could live here forever. The home-centre is on the hither side of the river, and why should we strain our eyes to look beyond? But this state of things does not continue long. Our circle grows less and less. It is broken and broken, and then closed up again; but every break and close make it narrower and smaller. Perhaps before the sun is at his meridian the majority are on the other side, the circle there is as large as the one here, and we are drawn contrariwise and vibrate between the two. A little longer, and we have almost all crossed over; the balance settles down on the spiritual side, and the home-centre is removed to the upper sphere. At length you see nothing but an aged pilgrim standing alone on the river's brink, and looking earnestly towards the country on the other side. In the morning, that large and goodly company rejoicing together with music and wine; in the evening, dwindled down to that solitary old man, the last of his family and the last of his generation, waiting to go home, and filled with pensive memories of the Long Ago!

"A question which the bereaved heart has sometimes revolved painfully, receives now a full and satisfactory solution: 'Shall we know our friends after

death?' How do we know them here? We know them since their peculiar qualities of mind and affection are imaged in the features, and expressed and toned in the living form, made effusive of the soul within. But all this is more completely true of the spiritual man, since the spiritual body is more quickly and perfectly the exponent of the soul, and the very effigy of its affection; and hence it will result that we shall know those we have loved even better than we knew them here. For there when thought meets thought, and heart opens to heart, it will be the fond gaze of the old, familiar faces;—faces that have not changed except to be made more familiar, since more than ever they are the living transparencies through which we look into the well-springs of hearts that have beat in unison with our own. The doctrine of friendly recognition is once formally stated in the New Testament,\* and always implied. I needed no other statement than the doctrine of the resurrection, from which it comes as a necessary corollary, while it chimes in with the prophetic yearnings of human hearts. The resurrection body is not manufactured and put on afterwards, but it is the heart's most cherished love growing into its most perfect form and likeness, putting on robes bright with the colors of the spirit and

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\* 1 Thessalonians iv: 13, 14.

wavy with its tremblements, and looking unclouded from its own features and aspect. Recognizing our friends! We hardly do as much now; for if we journey too far from each other, we find when we meet again that time has been so busy with our clay tenement, and has so beaten and battered it, that we look long, and must trace the old signs and lineaments as Old Mortality traced the inscriptions on the tombs. Death does not obliterate the handwriting, but removes the moss and the rubbish that had gathered over it, and the resurrection brings it out more boldly than alto-reliefs. Death removes the mask of time and age, that the undecaying affections may take on the face and features that belong to them in the freshness of their immortal prime. Yea, further, it results, if we choose to follow out the deduction, that we shall not only recognize the friends we have seen and loved, but friends we never saw before, though they have long been near us; for souls congenerous with each other will meet as if they had been kith and kin from the beginning,—just as here there are minds which on their first meeting seem each the complement of the other, and they will almost have it that they knew each other in some pre-existent world.

“Our present topic is exceedingly suggestive on the whole subject of the future retribution. The home-instinct constitutes the essential law that ar-

ranges the societies of heaven and hell. It is the 'Come, ye blessed,' and 'Depart, ye cursed,' not imposed as an arbitrary sentence from within. The soul which is foul, and whose life is perverted, is excluded from heaven, because there it would be the most wretched. It has no home-centre there, and the clash of life opposed to life would be sharp and dreadful. It goes where its most cherished and ruling affection shall find its sphere and exercise, because there it will suffer the least of anywhere in the universe, and there it finds all which in the nature of things it can enjoy; though, alas! how baleful is the glow of unclean lusts, and how dense the smoke of false illusions that ever rise out of them! The home-instinct is the law that dots the circles from highest to lowest, and concentrates around them all spirits in their class and order; and they shine forth star-like up the terraces of the heavenly mountain, or they gleam out point beyond point along the vales of Gehenna, and constitute the downward range of its lurid fires!"

*A FEW PRESS NOTICES OF THIS WORK.*

"The 'Foregleams of Immortality' will stand as a lovely classic in sacred literature, and a beautiful inspiration of pure devotional feeling. . . . The best test of merit of a book is when we feel we have been made better by reading it; and while the one now before us widens the field of intellectual vision, and makes solid and substantial the bridge from time to eternity, it quickens the conscience in

its sense of duty, and softens the heart with a tender and more celestial love."—*Christian Inquirer*.

"Dr. Sears has done a valuable service to reflecting minds in the preparation of this volume. . . . Nowhere is the argument for immortality more clearly set forth; nowhere are the Scripture facts, which testify to and affirm it, marshalled in closer array, or arranged with more logical consistency. The clear and beautiful style of the author adds new power to the lesson he has sought to teach, and gives added brightness to the page on which it is written."—*Boston Evening Transcript*.

"The other productions of Mr. Sears have been marked by the loftiest moral beauty, in the purest and most elegant diction; but this is his *chef-d'œuvre* in many respects. . . . We know no religious work of the age adapted to make a deeper, more practical, and more gladdening impression on thoughtful and lofty minds."—*Christian Register*.

"Few books have pleased me so much as 'Foregleams of Immortality.' It is full of beauty and truth. The writer is wise from Swedenborg, and has his own gifts besides. I can scarcely conceive of his writings not impressing many, and deeply. I have lent the book and recommended it in England, where the husks of the Old Theology interfere much with development and growth. Certainly it is a most beautiful and pungent book."—*Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in a letter to an American friend*.

"There is much in the details of the volume which is instructive, and especially as regards the reality and some of the features of the intermediate state. . . . The concluding part of the book is entirely new, being on the 'Symphony of Religions,' and sets forth the imperfect but yet valuable testimony of the various heathen religions to the grand truth of Immortality."—*Chicago Advance*.

"A very interesting volume.—The author has herein discussed the pregnant theme of Immortality with signal ability, clothing his thoughts in language so chaste and elegant, and illustrating his ideas by such a profusion of appropriate imagery, that the book has all the fascination of a beautiful poem. Yet its principal charm to a thoughtful mind is the abundant and beautiful *truth* it embodies and sets impressively before us upon a most important and interesting subject.

Although the author makes no mention of the New Church, and refers directly to Swedenborg only twice in the whole volume, it is plain that he is quite familiar with his writings. Indeed, the truths of the New Church stand out prominently on almost every page—as is the case in the beautiful work on Regeneration, from the pen of the same author.” —*The Swedenborgian*, in an extended and appreciative review of fifteen pages.

*“THE FOURTH GOSPEL, THE HEART OF CHRIST.”*

This is a work of 551 pages—the last, and considered by many as the ablest of all Dr. Sears’ works. The name of Swedenborg appears only three times in the whole volume; but the great central doctrine of the New Church as expounded in his writings (that is, the new doctrine of the Divine Humanity, and incidentally the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures and the doctrine of Life), is here unfolded in a degree of fullness, and its truth confirmed by a force of argument, unequalled in any other work that we have ever seen. And the author’s rhetoric is no less charming in this, nor his diction a whit less graceful than in his other works. A few pages will suffice to show his idea of the symbolic character of the sacred Scripture, and of the proper object of religious worship.

*SYMBOLIC CHARACTER OF SCRIPTURE.*

“To estimate aright the scope and temper of the Apocalypse we must have some adequate conception of the state of seership from which it professes to



have been produced. Professor Davidson, who writes learnedly about this book, has no other notion of that state of mind than the natural faculties excited to unwonted fervor and ecstasy. That 'the visions and their coloring were *given*, is an assumption,' he says, 'which deprives the author of consciousness, and is contrary to the analogy of prophecy.' It no more deprives the author of his consciousness, than the scenery of nature given every day to our natural vision, deprives us of our consciousness; and it is not only in analogy with prophecy, but it is prophecy itself in the exercise of its highest function. The seer has opened within him a more interior consciousness, to which the scenery of a higher world is unrolled. That scenery he can describe, and its changes he can note and chronicle, while his consciousness may be as vivid and more so than that of the astronomer when looking at the stars. He sees events in their causes; in those spiritual states and conditions that lie behind and within all material phenomena, and out of which material phenomena are evolved. Those states and conditions he sees represented by appropriate symbols. Those symbols may be given entire, or they may be in his own memory, the treasures of his own imagination; as in the case of John, whose mind was aglow with the imagery of the Saviour's discourses fondly preserved

and dwelt upon. In either case they are no longer his own, after they have passed into scenery which symbolizes the spiritual truths and realities of which all earthly realities are only the outcome and ultimatum.

“To illustrate: The seer beholds in vision the sun in sackcloth and the moon turned into blood. Does this foretell an eclipse of the sun and moon in the natural world? Nothing of the kind. It represents the divine light and love extinguished in human souls, and the woes and calamities that are sure to follow. He sees a conqueror, whose name is Faithful and True, riding upon a white horse with a sharp sword issuing from his mouth. Does this mean that we are to look in the natural world for a man on horseback with the same appearance and name? Nothing of the kind. It represents plainly Divine Truth in its triumphal power. He sees a city lying waste, and the temple in it about to be thrown down. Does this mean that some city answering to it in appearance is to be destroyed? Nothing of the kind. It means that a system of religion is to be overthrown whose worship has become false, and whose unitizing life has gone. In short, the psychological condition of the seer is such that he sees SPIRITUAL THINGS REPRESENTED BY NATURAL THINGS. We shall turn his vision into de-

lirious nonsense when we interpret him as representing *natural things by natural things*.

“And yet this is precisely what a long series of interpreters, ending with Professor Davidson, have been trying to do. Swedenborg is the only interpreter we have ever met with who does not flounder in this interminable slough. He keeps consistently on the spiritual plane, and though we do not pretend to understand his entire exegesis, we believe his method is the only rational one for interpreting a purely symbolical book, and that in the work under consideration, it unfolds some of the profoundest truths that ever searched the nature of man.”

#### *BABYLON AND THE NEW JERUSALEM.*

“The Jews had crucified the Lord spiritually before they nailed the Lord Jesus to the cross. Within their gorgeous ceremonials the Divine Life was extinct, and charity and humanity had ceased to pulsate through them. Pagan Rome was sitting on her seven hills drunk with the blood of martyrs, and a paganized Christianity was to succeed her with like power over the souls and bodies of men. It is important to observe, however, that not persons nor places, not Jerusalem and its pharisees, nor Rome with its em-

perors, nor the Roman Church with its papal tyrannies, are to be looked for exclusively in the Apocalypse. Not persons, but states of mind and depravities of heart infesting our human nature universally, are described in the symbolization of the seer; depravities of which all the Neros and Napoleons are the visible incarnation, and all ecclesiasticisms, used to serve the ends of human ambition and pride, are the body and form.

“Faith severed from life, dogma hard and frozen, with no pulse of charity in it, worship whose form stands forth as a gorgeous shell emptied alike of the knowledge of God and the love of man,—these are the same in quality, whether we call them by Jewish or Christian names, and the hatreds and strifes which they engender in the name of religion, are the plagues that fall upon men; out of these comes the pale horse, and the name of him that sits thereon is Death, and hell follows with him, and power is given him over the earth to kill with sword and with hunger and with death and with the beasts of the earth.

“Babylon is Rome;—human pride and ambition usurping the seat of God, and blasphemously sending forth anathemas in his name. But every church which has done the same is also Rome, and is apostate. The fires of Smithfield are not more lurid than the fires of Geneva; and the plagues that fall on the

bodies of men are not worse than those which blight the soul. Not anything in the natural world, whether of men or cities, appears in the vision of the seer. But the infernal depravities, born of our uncleansed human selfhood, latent alike, reader, in your nature and in mine, subsidizing even the religious sentiment to the service of its own lust, aggrandizement and glory, and pouring out the seven plagues on the earth and on the sea, are the Apocalypse of woe irrespective of person and time ; and if we read it, more willing to be searched beneath it than to judge others by it, no book that ever was written would open into more startling sunlight the pages of our book of life.

“There is no priesthood, Roman or Protestant, which does not need betimes the exploration of its trumpet voices, to show them whether they are using the forms of Christianity for their own power and glory, or only to bless and save mankind. There is no church, Roman or Protestant, which does not need to have its ruling motive and that of all its members revealed to its consciousness ; and if religion is something apart from life, if faith is divorced from works, held and professed only for a man's personal salvation, and not made warm and radiant with all the charities and humanities, they should find themselves revealed in this book quite as much as the dynasties that have passed away. Not material weapons, not flesh and

blood, but evils and delusions of the heart and mind, hinder the descent of the New Jerusalem.

“And the New Jerusalem is neither a lo! here, nor a lo! there. It is not an ecclesiasticism, but a form of faith, of doctrine, and of worship, so warm with the love of the Lord that He abides in the soul, the river of its peace, the fountain of its charities, the inspiration of its tender humanities, after all the old Judaism and Romanism have been adjudged and cast away. It is Christianity unitizing God, man, and nature; making our cleansed and renovated humanity the tabernacle of God with men, and thence turning the earth into Eden, and making it the reflex image of the skies. It descends into all minds, and thence into all the ecclesiasticisms, as we renounce our Judaism and our heathenism for the spirit of universal brotherhood, and then ‘the nations of them that are saved do walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their honor and glory into it.’

“The worship and ritual of heaven, and thence of the New Jerusalem descending out of it, in contrast with the worship whose interior truths have been falsified or lost, is set forth in one of those chapters which open into the serene vistas of the higher world. The heart becomes tender and warm in the light which comes down through it from the central glory. ‘God and the Lamb’ is the twofold

designation of the object of the Christian's supreme worship and love. This does not imply any divided homage, but the Lamb is a predicate of the one divine Being, and sets forth his relations to the creatures He has made. Its essential meaning is sacrifice, and coupled with the Divine name it signifies that God himself is one great sacrifice for man. Not alone in the sacrifice on Calvary He gives himself away for the expiation and forgiveness of sin. Beyond its solemn heights and away through the door opened into heaven, He appears as the essential sacrifice given hourly for the redemption of the world. Ever going out of himself, and coming down to our lowly condition, underlying all our weaknesses, and helping us bear up our weary burdens, present in all our sufferings and suffering with us, sinking himself out of sight beneath our mortal infirmities, clothing himself with them, as it were, that He may help us the more; rejected, injured, wounded, grieved away by our hardness of heart and blindness of mind, his very life killed out of us when striving most to enter and save us,—such is the eternal sacrifice of God; and so when we look up to the throne with eyes made wet with repentance, we see not the thunder-clouds of wrath but *a lamb as it had been slain*.

“Truth, as seen by the pure intellect, is white and silvery; but truth transfused and made chromatic

with the divine love is golden; and when it rules right royally over the conscience and the life, it crowns us, and we wear it as our diadem of praise. But how prone we are to wear it as our personal adornment; as something which we have wrought out and perfected, and so make it our crown of pride, to draw with it the admiration and applause of the crowd! Hence all our priestly ambitions and all the selfish motives by which the rights of worship have been made aglow with strange fire. Hence the controversies that have been waged only for personal victory. Hence our pulpit eloquence is so prevailingly an exhibition of self-love or the love of popular applause, and hence our churches are gathered admiringly around the preacher who expands so largely with the breath of praise, that the Lord Jesus Christ is not seen at all, but is kept behind him out of sight. But when we get gleams of the ritual of heaven, the elders who wear crowns of gold cast them down at the feet of Him that sitteth on the throne, saying: 'Thou, O Lord, art worthy.' The whole scene, both in the description and the symbolic meaning, is impressive and grand beyond all human conception; and we never read it without being ashamed of the strut and vanity of our ecclesiastical pomps so faintly chromatic with the divine love, nor without an aspiration that the crowns we wear, of



so lurid and fiery a lustre, may be exchanged betimes for the crowns of gold, fit to be cast down in that beautiful ceremonial which ascribes 'blessing and honor and glory and power unto Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'"

*INCARNATION OF THE DIVINE.*

"Supposing it possible, however, for a being to be born into our earthly degree of existence with a finite maternal humanity on one side and the Divine Spirit on the other, with no finite fatherhood between, then it is conceivable that as the maternal humanity waned and the paternal dawned and brightened through the consciousness, it would image forth to us the Divine perfections on a loftier plane of existence than man and nature had ever done. Such a person would not speak and teach and act merely from a finite and fallible intelligence, but as the inmost Divine waxed and the outward and finite waned, he would speak and teach and act from the Divine reason itself. Such would not be a case of mere prophetic inspiration, which is temporary and vanishing, but of Divine incarnation, in which the voice of the Divine Reason is the normal dictate of the soul.

"It would not be right to say that such a being is God, if you mean that God is limited to any outward

symbolization; but it would be true that the finite maternal humanity, waning and disappearing, God would be revealed to us in a higher degree of life, and in more perfect and unclouded glory than inanimate nature or sinful men could ever reveal Him. And though what is called 'the hypostatic union' is beyond our comprehension and analysis, so also is any union of the Infinite with finite natures. In man God is one degree nearer to us than in the animal, but in a Divine Humanity he would be nearer still, and with a personality more openly brought to view. In a person divinely human there would be nothing unnatural, but something more than natural; there would be nature transfigured and exalted. There would be nothing inhuman, but something more than human; humanity made divine, and therefore the most clear and spotless mirror through which the divine attributes shine forth upon the world.

"We can conceive that there might be a necessity in the course of human advancement for such a revelation of the Divine Perfections; that sinful men, however developed, are no adequate representatives of God; that there was an appropriate time for some knowledge of Him above the light of nature, above depraved human instincts, above legal codes and verbal declarations; that these instincts themselves might have been yearning forward in expectation of a

nearer divine epiphany, as when men watch the reddening streaks of twilight; until God should appear as a new sunrise, to light up the dark annals of the earth with diviner glow.

"We are assuming nothing here. We are only describing the rational possibilities and probabilities of the case. Men might find God partially in nature and in themselves, for He is immanent in both; but in such a divine epiphany He would be revealed in a higher DEGREE OF LIFE, and illustrate both nature and man more perfectly from the divine side of all created things. By the immanence of God, in us, we might surely recognize such an advent of the Lord when it takes place. But we should not be likely to master its psychology, since we know it so little in the lower degrees of life, where infinite and finite interpenetrate in nature and in ourselves."

"John supplements them (Matthew and Luke) by saying that the Word, which was *ἐν ἀρχῇ* with God, and in its first principle divine, descending into this world to subdue and save it, took this humanity for its clothing and was the soul of its soul and the life of its life.

"Legendary! A legend is a cumulative accretion of hearsays around a nucleus of common fact, clothing it in the garb of fable; and the common fact here was the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of Joseph and

Mary. Legendary! the story might appear so, if you isolate it and make it stand alone. But why do you isolate it? Read on, and at the farther end of the biography we come to the death of this person, quite as exceptional as his birth. The flesh thus assumed as the investiture of a divine life did not become a corpse, like the bodies of other men, to see corruption in the grave. It was extruded by a living process, through the abounding energy within, when the divine man it had served ascended to his place on high. If you make his ingress into this world as here given legendary, why not reduce his egress from it into the same category? If you shut the divine portal through which He came in, why not also the divine portal through which He went out?

“Then just sit down and scan the facts that lie between and see what can be made of them. The life between constantly forecasts just that exit from this world; it courses its way on planes of being far above those on which we walk, and subsumes just such a birth and death. You must run the legendary theory through that also, till all the history is disorganized and tumbles into chaos. And even then you have only just begun. This life of Christ on earth was preliminary and preparatory to a deeper and broader life in humanity, coursing through the history of eighteen hundred years. The record goes on to say

that he appeared after his resurrection as the guardian of those communions called churches, and that the Holy Ghost through him 'fell on them' and gave them their conquering power. The Christian Church ever since, conscious of his presence and inworking divine energy, has originated, led on, and inspired all the advanced civilizations of the world, and is leading them still. Legendary! Why not make all the after-history legendary too, and the world's progress starting from fiction and always proceeding under it! This life, dating from that birth at Bethlehem, has continued ever since, and it spans our lowly history and floods it with more than rainbow glories, one foot of its celestial arc resting at the manger where Mary lay, and the other on in the future, for aught we can tell, at the end of time. Legendary! Is it necessary to abstract such a birth from its relations and reduce it to the conditions of our own babyhood?"

#### *THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.*

"In the death and resurrection of Christ the natural body saw no corruption. In this mainly is his transition distinguished from ours. But there are considerations connected with it of vast significance. The transforming power of our own interior life over the natural body which is its clothing and exfigura-

tion continues up to the moment of death. There it ceases, and the immortal being must be extricated from his mortal coverings. He has no power to extrude them and return them uncorrupted to their native elements, and so he leaves a corpse as his legacy to the earth.

“But the Life made flesh in Jesus Christ is not to be measured by the weak and languid pulses of ours. It was nearer the infinite source and was the fullness of the Godhead bodily. That a Spirit like his should not need extrication from the bonds of death, but should rapidly transform them and turn them by a living process into their native ethers, leaving no corpse to see corruption, is consonant with all that is told us of his birth, of his Divine Life transfiguring the natural form that invested it as that Life was growing deep and full and too resplendent for its earthly foliage.

“What is the change signified by the ascension of Christ? A higher and more perfect pneumatology will show, we doubt not, that death is something very different from what our childish imaginations have made it; that there are no breaks and chasms in our continuous being; that, therefore, the first condition after death is in some sort of congruity with the condition before death; that the spiritual body evolved from the natural does not put off at once

all its natural appearances and adaptations.\* Hence the pre-ascension appearances of the 'forty days,' when Jesus showed his disciples his hands and his side, saying, 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.' But when the Divine Life from within was ultimated in its full power and brightness, all the remnants of the natural life disappeared, and Jesus was only ensphered with the celestial glories. And this was the ascension of Christ! Type and representation of our own transition, if we follow humbly through his upward and radiant pathway! After the ascension his disciples only saw Him in their more heavenly frames and beholdings.

"There are those who talk of intuition as the surest and highest evidence, but who do not seem to be aware of the application of the truth which they invoke. All other intuitions pale into dimness before those which attest the resurrection of Jesus Christ. All other revelations of God in humanity compared with this are as starlight which precedes the dawn. Not the vision of apostles alone, not the word of eye-

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\*Swedenborg in his very rational pneumatology illustrates this at large, showing that the changes from an earthly to a heavenly condition through death are not made by crossing over chasms, but by the life within unfolding in an orderly way and robing itself anew, so that the natural appearances just before death and just after may be similar.

witnesses on the great morning and during the 'forty days;' but the *consensus* of Christendom for eighteen hundred years is cumulative evidence for the reappearing of Jesus. The highest experiences and profoundest introversions of the purest and healthiest minds along this whole track of the centuries, bring them into correspondency with the risen and glorified Saviour; not by open vision, but by signs and tokens quite as trustworthy. When men have been turned from darkness to light, from the slavery of lust and sin to the joyous service of the living God; when the Divine Voice has come down upon the stormy seas of passion in the soul commanding audience, 'still as night or summer's noon-tide air;' when all its higher powers have been waked into life; faith, sympathy, disinterested love, tenderness towards God and towards everything that breathes; when the peace has come at last where storms and conflicts are no more; it has all been with the profoundest consciousness of a risen Saviour near at hand, with his assurance, 'All power is given me both in heaven and upon the earth.' If the intuitions of the soul are to be appealed to, what are its shadowy gropings compared with these sun-bright beholdings of so many of the best and healthiest minds through a period of eighteen hundred years?"



*THE NEW JERUSALEM DESCENDING.*

In his chapter on "Converging Lines," near the close of the book, Dr. Sears shows us that he sees the New Jerusalem descending not merely as a new and visible church organization, but as the increasing influx of new light and life into all humble, faithful and obedient souls. He says:—

"The living Christ, we say, leads and inspires the thought of all our advancement to-day. Any reform that meets with tolerable success, succeeds, because the Christ is in it, showing the worth of man as an immortal being, the child of a universal Father and the member of a universal brotherhood, his fellowship being not of earth and time only, but of the glorified in heaven as well, whose sympathies draw us mightily upward, and whose 'Come up higher!' ever falls down to cheer us. There is not a denomination of Christendom, whose literature we are acquainted with, which does not show that the Spirit is coming within them with greater fullness and tenderness, making their theologies fluid in the love of Christ, as they reflect from his face in softer light the Beatitudes which he spake and lived.

"All this being so, another consequence inevitably follows. We cannot move towards the Christ without

coming closer to each other. Leave out Him and his unitizing Word, and let every man strike out for himself, and we tend to a crumbling individualism, to endless distraction and confusion. But those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as the supreme authority and guide, and enter more into his all-revealing mind, are making progress towards the harmonizing truths which he represents. However wide apart they may be at the start, their progress is ever on converging lines. Essential truth becomes more and more central and manifest, the non-essential falls away to its subordinate place, and orthodox and unorthodox move alike towards a higher and higher unity. It is not that any one sect is making a conquest of the others, but Jesus Christ is making a conquest of us all."

#### THE APOSTOLIC THRONES.

"When we undertake to interpret a symbolical book, we should not mix up symbol and letter into a jumble. We have seen into what a slough of insane nonsense the Apocalypse may thus be turned. But keep constantly to its symbolic meaning, and though we may not be drawn up to its sublime heights of vision, we shall have the same serene and blissful openings that are given us in the fourth Gospel.

"*Persons* in the Apocalypse, and the imagery amid

which they appear, very often symbolize truths in a connected series; even Christianity, as a system of truth, in its power of judging, regenerating, and saving mankind. What are the apostolic thrones? Seats raised aloft with the fishermen of Galilee robed royally and sitting thereon, as the judges of their fellow men, they to whom the injunction first came,—Judge not that ye be not judged? Not at all; but the apostolic truths which they represented, applied in their royal power to subdue and save, and beneath which those twelve men have learned by this time to bring themselves in lowly self-surrender.

“And what is the worship of ‘God and the Lamb?’ Is it the worship of a created, dependent being, receiving the alleluias of the universe while seated on the throne of God? Is this the worship received by a man who came to teach humility, and whose last office on earth was washing his disciples’ feet? Is it the kind of worship we render to sovereigns, magistrates, and prophets? How John himself was taught to regard such worship, rendered not alone to magistrates and prophets, but to an angel of heaven of large commission, he has told us; for when he fell down to worship at the feet of the angel, though not rendering supreme worship,—for there is no intimation that he mistook the angel for the Almighty,—he was promptly rebuked, ‘See thou do it not, for I am

thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets,  
—*worship God.*”

SOME PRESS NOTICES OF THIS WORK.

“‘The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ,’ is a book of extraordinary interest. . . . Judged as a volume on its own merits, it is a rich and fresh contribution to the literature of the ages touching the life of our Lord. It is instructive and suggestive in the highest ranges of Christian thought and feeling.”—*The Congregationalist*.

“No book of recent American theology is likely to win more notice from thoughtful readers than this handsome volume by Edmund H. Sears, of 551 pages. As a work of literary art it has great merit; and its clear, rich, and vivid style carries in its flow great wealth of thought and learning with cumulative power to the end.”—*The Church and State*.

“We regard this book as altogether the most valuable contribution to theological literature which has been made during the present century, and one destined to exert a most powerful and benign influence on all the churches. For no minister or theological student can afford to be without it, while no one can read it attentively without being profoundly impressed by it.”—*Arthur's Home Magazine*.

“One of the most deeply interesting volumes of this generation. It is as much superior to ‘Ecce Homo’ in power of statement, grasp of thought, and freshness of conception, as that was to the Christologies of average writers.”—*The Light of Home*.

“The argument of the book is cumulative, and one needs to read it through conscientiously in order to feel the strength of its positions. We believe that the interest which it has awakened is likely to increase; and that, while it will lead toward a modification of the theories both of the Orthodox and of the Unitarian theologians, it will tend powerfully to conserve and establish the essential truths of the Christian system.”—*The New York Independent*.

“This is certainly one of the most interesting and valuable offerings to theological and devotional literature which has been made in our country in this generation.”—*The Liberal Christian*.

"It is long since there has appeared in theological literature a work of such power and significance as the present. Deeply reverent and tender, imbued with a thorough sympathy with its subject, it sketches the life of the God-man, with a degree of grace and beauty rarely attained in books of its class."—*The Boston Journal*.

"This stout book of 551 pages is one of the most important volumes yet contributed to theological literature in this country. It is written from a clear head and full heart; it is not dry argument or skeleton theology, but the thought glows with life, and the rhetoric is as grand and beautiful as the logic is strong."—*Cincinnati Times and Chronicle*.

"'The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ,' by Rev. Edmund H. Sears, is a book of real ability, admirable spirit, and conclusive argument. The author evolves the contents of the Johannean writings, which, he claims, clearly apprehended, are their own evidence, and prove Christianity itself a gift direct from above, and not a human discovery."—*The New York Bulletin*.

"Mr. Sears' Christmas hymn is as well known as any poem in American literature, and is read and sung by hundreds of thousands who have but a faint appreciation of his worth as a religious thinker and scholar. If these persons could only know that the same tenderness and beauty which find expression in that immortal hymn, breathe through this labored work on 'the beloved disciple,' they would rush to it like 'a famished host on miraculous bread.'"—*The Boston Globe*.

"No book of our time is adapted to produce a more decisive influence on thought and feeling. Its style is its own and its author's—glowing and fervent throughout, yet calm and gentle, as if from a perennial hearth-flame of devout emotion. We believe, too, that there are in all sections of the Church devout minds that have been waiting for precisely the clear light and definite views which this book will give them."—*The Christian Register*.

"Those who hold to a real tripersonal Trinity, will not accept all the results of Dr. Sears. But all who believe in the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ, in the regeneration of fallen man by the Divine influence, and in the inspiration and authority of the Gospels and other New Testament writings, will regard his work as one of peculiar power and value. In spirit it is heavenly and full of vital energy; in style it is beautiful and finished."—*The Christian Union*.

“‘The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ,’ is a work of extraordinary interest, depth, and power. There has been nothing equal to it for the last century. . . . We unhesitatingly pronounce it the richest and most valuable contribution to theological literature ever made by an American author. And its charming spirit as well as its masterly treatment of a lofty theme, must commend it to Christians of every name, and secure for it a large circle of thoughtful readers.”—*The New Church Magazine*.


Many more notices of this work similar to the above might be cited from the periodical press. No other theological work by an American author has ever received or merited such unqualified praise as the press has bestowed on “The Heart of Christ.” It has been commended alike by orthodox and heterodox, Trinitarians and Unitarians, the religious and the secular papers; but by none more highly than by *The New Church Magazine*. And the reason for this is obvious; for although the name of Swedenborg occurs only three times in the book, yet its entire doctrines and philosophy and spirit and method of interpreting Sacred Scripture, are precisely those we find in the writings of the illumined Swede—and *nowhere else in their entirety*, or full and vital coherence.

And the high commendation which this work—as well as the others of Dr. Sears, above quoted—has received from so many educated, independent and truth-loving men and women, proves three things: first, the importance, reasonableness and Scripturalness

of Swedenborg's teachings; second, the readiness with which these teachings are received by thoughtful and serious minds when the teacher's name is withheld, or mentioned only casually; and third, the blind and senseless prejudice of many religious teachers, who ignorantly oppose and ridicule writings from which they might derive so much spiritual light and help.

But none of the notices above quoted, appreciative and commendatory as they all are, do anything like full justice to this grand and luminous work. Nor is it easy—hardly possible, perhaps—to convey to another's mind the cumulative force and perfect conclusiveness of the argument by which the author demolishes the "legendary" theory of modern skeptics concerning the Fourth Gospel; or the unequalled fullness and clearness with which he unfolds from this Gospel the doctrine of the Divine Humanity, or the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. To get a clear idea of this, one must himself read the book.

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 The works of Dr. Sears here quoted from, can be had of the Swedenborg Publishing Association at publishers' prices, viz. :—

The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ . . . . .	\$1 50
Foregleams and Foreshadows of Immortality . . . . .	1 00
Regeneration . . . . .	75
Christ in the Life . . . . .	1 25

## CHAPTER VI.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. HORACE BUSHNELL, D. D.

**A**MONG the eminent witnesses to the truth, value and need of the new revealings through Swedenborg, we cite with much pleasure this distinguished author and estimable man. Dr. Bushnell was for many years pastor of an orthodox Congregational church in Hartford, Connecticut. He was a man of rare spiritual insight, coupled with great freedom and independence of thought, and one of the noblest men that ever occupied the American pulpit. All who have read or will read his "Life and Letters," prepared and edited by his daughter, Mrs. Cheney, cannot fail to see that he was one of the broadest, purest, humblest, and kindest of men; and that the following testimony publicly borne by his intimate friend and successor, Rev. Dr. Burton, falls far short of the whole truth:—

"Dr. Bushnell's mind," says Dr. Burton, "was one of the rarest. What it was in his books, that it was in private, with certain very piquant and unforgettable personal flavors added. It was original almost beyond



precedent; . . . it was independent, courageous always, incisive, imperative, not cumbered by excessive and undigested reading, almost irreverent at times towards mere [human] authority, . . . but truth-loving (intensely so), debative, soldierly, massive, mobile, impressible to every touch, as the sea to the swaying of the winds,—a mind so royal in many ways as to awaken a never-failing and profound admiration in those who knew him best."

His published works, numbering some eight or nine volumes, have had a wide circulation, and are commonly reckoned by advanced thinkers as belonging to the best religious literature of our times. They are to be found in all the best libraries of religious books, both public and private, are read by many ministers and theological students of nearly every denomination, and have doubtless contributed in no small degree to the recent movement in the orthodox churches of our country commonly spoken of as the New Theology. That his writings should be considered heretical by those who are deeply confirmed in the old doctrines, and who do not believe in a progressive theology, is not surprising. But that they should have met with a cordial reception from so many thoughtful and intelligent people, and should have received such strong commendation as they have from leading and influential journals, is a clear

indication of religious progress;—a sign of the increasing dissatisfaction with the Old and a growing readiness to accept the New and more rational as well as scriptural interpretation of the Christian religion.

It is not generally known that Dr. Bushnell was a reader of Swedenborg's writings, for he never quotes from him, and rarely mentions him by name—only once, we believe, in his largest work, "Nature and the Supernatural." But his writings furnish ample evidence not only of his familiarity with, but of his cordial acceptance of, all the principal doctrines of the New Church as revealed through Swedenborg. He rejects (as will be seen by some extracts from his writings) the Old and still widely accepted doctrines of the Trinity, Atonement, Substitution, Expiation, Intercession, Salvation by faith alone, an individual or personal Devil, and other related doctrines; and substitutes, in lieu of them, substantially the New Church view, though never using its or Swedenborg's terminology. And he plainly accepts and teaches the New doctrines of the personal unity of God, the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ, the Divine Humanity, the symbolic character of the Scriptures, the pre-eminence of charity or love, the relation of the natural to the spiritual world, the presence and influence of both good and evil spirits, and the New Church doctrine of Correspondence. And if he had never read a page

of Swedenborg, his own writings would be none the less pertinent and valid as testimony to the truth, value, and spiritual helpfulness of the great seer's revealings, on account of their close agreement with them. We proceed to give a few extracts from his writings in illustration and confirmation of what we have here said.

#### *THE OLD DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.*

“A very large portion of the Christian teachers, together with the general mass of disciples, undoubtedly hold three real living persons in the interior nature of God; that is, three consciousnesses, wills, hearts, understandings. Certain passages of Scripture supposed to represent the three persons as covenanting, co-operating, and co-presiding, are taken accordingly, so to affirm, in the most literal and dogmatic sense.

“But our properly orthodox teachers and churches while professing three persons, also retain the verbal profession of one person. They suppose themselves really to hold that God is one person. And yet they most certainly do not; they only confuse their understanding, and call their confusion faith. This, I affirm, not as speaking reproachfully, but, as I suppose, on the ground of sufficient evidence—partly because it cannot be otherwise, and partly because it visibly is not. No man can assert three persons, meaning three consciousnesses, wills and understandings, and still

have any intelligent meaning in his mind, when he asserts that they are yet one person.

"This, in fact, is polytheism, and not the clear, simple love of God. There is true love in it, doubtless, but the comfort of love is not here. The mind is involved in a dismal confusion, which we cannot think of without the sincerest pity. No soul can truly rest in God, when God is two or three, and these in such a sense that a choice between them must be continually suggested.

"If any one will say that he believes in three metaphysical or essential persons in the being of God, there is no argument that can set him in a more unsatisfactory position, whether intellectually or practically, than he takes himself. Or if any one endeavors to relieve his position, by declaring that he only means distinctions by the word *persons*, he then flies into darkness and negation for his comfort, and there he may safely be left. We take, then, as a first point, to be held immovably, the strict personal unity of God—one mind, will, consciousness. Then, secondly, we have, as a term to be reconciled with this, the three of Scripture, and the living person walking the earth, in the human form, called Jesus Christ—a subject, suffering being, whose highest and truest reality is that he is God."—*God in Christ*, pp. 130, 131, 134, 136.

#### THE OLD DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

"A very great number of Christian teachers, even at this day, maintain that Christ suffered exactly as

much pain as all the redeemed would have suffered under the penalties of eternal justice.

"If evil remitted must be repaid by an equivalent, what real economy is there in the transaction? What is effected, save the transfer of penal evil from the guilty to the innocent?

"And if the great Redeemer, in the excess of his goodness, consents, freely offers himself to the Father, or to God, to receive the penal woes, or some sufficient part of the penal woes of the world, in his own person, what does it signify, when that offer is accepted, but that God will have his modicum of suffering somehow—if he lets the guilty go, will yet satisfy himself out of the innocent? In which the divine government, instead of clearing itself, assumes the double ignominy, first of letting the guilty go, and secondly, of accepting the sufferings of innocence! In which Calvin, seeing no difficulty, is still able to say, when arguing for Christ's three days in hell,—‘it was requisite that he should feel the severity of the divine vengeance, in order to appease the wrath of God, and satisfy his justice.’ I confess my inability to read this kind of language without a sensation of horror.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 194, 195, 196.

#### EXPIATION—A PAGAN DOCTRINE.

"What is expiation? It does not, I answer, simply signify the fact that God is propitiated, but it brings in the pagan, or Latin idea (for it is a Latin word), that the sacrifice offered softens God, or assuages the anger of God, as being an evil, or pain, contributed

to his offended feeling. That Christ has fulfilled a mission of sacrifice, and become a reconciling power on human character, has been abundantly shown. And this change thus wrought in men, we shall also see, is the condition of a different relationship on the part of God. But an expiatory sacrifice proposes a settlement with God on a different footing; viz., that God is to be propitiated, or gained over to a new relationship, by very different means. The distinctive idea of expiation is that God is to have an evil given him by consent, for an evil due by retribution. It throws in before God or the gods some deprecatory evil, in the expectation that the wrath may be softened or averted by it. The power of the expiation depends not on the sentiments, or repentances, or pious intentions connected with it, but entirely on the voluntary damage incurred in it. According to the Latin idea, '*Diis violatis expiatio debetur*'—when the gods are wronged, expiation is their due—and the understanding is that, when the wrong doers fall to punishing themselves in great losses, it mitigates the wrath of the gods and turns them to the side of favor.

“As repentance settles into penance under this regimen of superstition, so the sacrifices settled into expiations under the same. And the process only went a little farther, when they fell, as they did the pagan world over, into the practice of human sacrifices; for since the gods were to be gained by expiatory evils, the greater the evil the more sure the favor; and therefore they sometimes offered their captives, sometimes their sons and daughters, sometimes their

kings' sons, and sometimes even their kings and queens themselves; believing that in no other manner could they sufficiently placate their envious and bloody deities.

"If it is a mere feeling in God which is to be placated by an expiatory sacrifice, then we have to ask, is God such a being that, having a good mortgage title to pain or suffering as against an offender, he will never let go the title till he gets the pain—if not from him, then from some other? Such a conception of God is simply shocking."—*Vicarious Sacrifice*, pp. 486, 487, 491.

*THE DOCTRINE OF SUBSTITUTION—A MOCKERY OF  
LAW AND JUSTICE.*

"Suppose it be so, and that God, as a ruler of the world, is bound to do by every man just as he deserves. What means this inflexible adherence to the point of desert, when, by the supposition, he is going to accept, in expiation, an evil not deserved? He is going, in fact, to overturn all relations of desert, by taking pains not deserved, to release pains that are. Is this justice? or is it the most complete and solemn abnegation possible of justice? To get a pain out of somebody, is not justice; nothing answers to that name, but the inexorable, undivertible, straight-aimed process of execution against the person of the wrong doer himself.

"To remit a punishment or pain deserved, in consideration of a similar punishment or pain not deserved, accepted by an innocent party, so far from

being any due support of law, is the worst possible mockery of it. It belongs to the very idea of punishment, that it fall on the transgressor himself, not on any other, even though he be willing to receive it. The law reads 'do this or thou shalt die,' not 'do this or somebody shall die.' A fine, or a debt, may be paid by anybody; but a punishment sticks immovably to the wrong doer, and no commutation, expiation, or transfer of places can remove it."—*Ibid.*, pp. 492, '3.

MEDIATION AND INTERCESSION.

"We speak of Christ as a mediator, and as doing a work of mediation; which is Scriptural, but we often conceive that he is literally a third being, coming in between us and God to compose our difficulty with him, by gaining him as it were to softer terms. But he is no such mediator at all, nor any mediator, such as does not leave him to be God manifest in all God's proper feeling. No, he is a mediator only in the sense that, as being in humanity, he is a medium of God to us; such a medium that, when we cling to him in faith, we take hold of God's own life and feeling as the Infinite Unseen, and are taken hold of by Him, reconciled, and knit everlastingly to Him, by what we receive.

"We call Christ our intercessor, too, and conceive that we are saved by his intercession. Does he then intercede for us in the sense that he goes before God in a plea to gain him over to us, showing God his wounds, and the print of his nails, to soften him towards us. Far from that as possible; nothing



could be more unworthy. Intercession means literally intervention, that is a coming between; and it is not God that wants to be softened, or made better; for Christ himself is only the incarnate love and sacrificing patience of God; but the stress of the intercession is with us and in our hearts' feeling—all which we simply figure, objectively, when we conceive him as the priest that liveth ever to make intercession for us."—*Ibid.*, pp. 71; 72.

#### GOD HUMANIZED.

"It is a very great point, as regards the kind of power Christ is obtaining, that he humanizes God to men. I have already spoken of the necessary distance and coldness of a mere attribute power, such as we ourselves generate, when trying to think of God as the Absolute Being. The incarnate life and history of Jesus meet us here, at the point of our weakness. God is in Christ, consenting to obtain the power, by which he will regain us to himself, under our own human conditions. He is in our plane, acting with us and for us, interpreted to our sympathies by what he does and is, in social relationship with us. His perfections meet us in our own measures, not in the impossible measures of infinity; and so he becomes a world-king in the world, and not above it and far away from it. We know him, in just the same way as we know one another. He becomes the great Head Character in human history, by living in it himself—such a kind of power, as being once in it, can never be gotten out of it, any more than if it were a new

diffusive element in the world's atmosphere. God is no more a theosophy, or mere phosphorescence of our human intelligence; no more a theophany, like those casual appearances of the Jehovah Angel in the old dispensation; . . . but a God-human or God-man, born into our race itself, and even into a place in our human tables of genealogy. And since we are so deep in the senses, he contrives to meet us there, that we may hear, see with our eyes, look upon, handle him with our hands. Nay, he comes directly into our bodies themselves, by the healing of his inward touch, and occupies a great part of his ministry in works that take hold of our sympathy, by means of our diseases.

"No greater advance on human sensibility, we may fairly say, could possibly be made, than is in fact made, in this wonderful chapter of humanization, that contains the teachings, healings, tender condescensions, and sufferings, of the divine man Jesus. He builds up anew, so to speak, and before our eyes, in the open facts of his ministry, the divine perfections themselves, and the moral power he obtains in doing it is just what it must be; a name that is above every name."—*Ibid.*, pp. 220, 221.

*A NEW INAUGURATION OF FAITH.*

"Anything which displaces the present jealousy of what is supernatural, or abolishes the timidity of faith must, as we may readily see, be an important contribution to Christian experience and the practical life of religion. Nothing do we need so deeply as a new inauguration of faith; or, perhaps I should rather

say, a reinauguration of the apostolic faith, and the spirit which distinguished the apostolic age. And yet a reinauguration of this must, in some very important sense, be a new inauguration; for it can be accomplished only by some victory over naturalism, that prepares a rational foundation for the supernatural—such as was not wanted, and was, therefore, impossible to be prepared, in the first age of the church.”—*Nature and the Supernatural*, pp. 32, 33.

#### RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

“Before this unbending prisoner of fate, this nature-God, this dead wall, man might go on to dress up a character and fashion a merely ethical virtue; cultivating truth, honesty, justice, temperance, kindness, piling up acts of merit, and doing legal works of charity; but to call this character religious, however plausible the show it makes, is only an abuse of the term. Religious character is not legal. It is an inspiration—the Life of God in the Soul of Man; and no such life can ever quicken a soul except in the faith of a Living God, which here is manifestly wanting. Not even the pure angels could subsist in such a style of virtue; for it is the strength and beatitude of their holiness, that it is no will-work in them, but an eternal, immediate inspiration of God. Consciously it is not theirs, but the inbreathing life of their Father.”—*Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 235.

*MAN'S POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY.*

"Man has, at every moment, a complete power as respects doing what God requires of him at that moment, and is responsible according to his power. And yet, when we say a complete power, we mean, not so much that he is going even then to do something himself, as that he is going to have something done within him, by the quickening and transforming power of his divine Lord, in whom he trusts. His power is to set himself before power, open his nature to the rule of power, and so to live. Even as we may say that a tree has power to live and grow, not by acting on itself and willing to grow, but as it is ministered unto by its natural surroundings, the soil, the sun, the dew, the air. It has only to offer itself openly and respectively to these, and by their force to grow."—*Ibid.*, p. 239.

*DIVINE PROVIDENCE.*

"On this subject of Providence there is much of unregulated thought and crude speculation. Thus it is a greatly debated question, whether there is a special, or only a general Providence? For it is conceived, by a certain class, that God has a special meaning or design, in some few things of their experience, and not in others. This plainly is a faith of credulity, and one that accommodates God to the measures of human ignorance. Another class, who assume to be more philosophic, holding a general, and denying a special Providence, only substitute an ab-

surdity for a superstition ; for what is a general Providence that comprehends no special Providence, but a generality made up of no particulars ; that is, made out of nothing ? The only intelligent conception is, that every event is special, one as truly as another ; for nothing comes to pass in God's world without some particular meaning or design. And so the general Providence is perfect, because the special is complete."—*Ibid.*, pp. 406, 407.

#### CHARACTER BEFORE CREED.

"Nor will it ever be found that a truly catholic spirit undervalues truth. It only pays it higher homage, as being of a nature so vast that no man or sect can perfectly contain it. The same spirit, too, which makes us catholic, makes us modest, and modesty is the first condition of successful study in the truth. Or, if we speak of purity, what harm is likely to follow, if a church, under the moderating power of a catholic spirit, deems its purity violated more by an unspiritual or bad life, than by a false opinion ; for what is surer to bring in false opinions, by system and without limit, than to hold, at the root of all, an opinion so false as to set the creed or the form before the life—thus to cast out every shade of error, and suffer patiently examples of practical misconduct.

"And what will God, in his justice, more surely give up to delusion, than the sanctimonious bigotry which crucifies an error and hugs a sin ? The worst of all heretics is the man of a loose practice. And

the same rule of purity holds, in reference to the acknowledgment of those who belong to other families and sects. The best defence of purity is never to cast out of a church, never to withhold the acknowledgment of brotherhood, for any kind of opinion which does not destroy the confidence of character. By their fruits ye shall know them."—*Christian Nurture*, p. 238.

CHRISTIAN NURTURE IN THE HOME.

"What motives are laid upon all Christian parents, by the doctrine I have established, to make the first article of family discipline a constant and careful discipline of themselves. I would not undervalue a strong and decided government in families. No family can be rightly trained without it. But there is a kind of virtue, my brethren, which is not in the rod—the virtue, I mean, of a truly good and sanctified life. And a reign of brute force is much more easily maintained, than a reign whose power is righteousness and love.

"Your real aim and study must be to infuse into your children a new life; and, to this end, the Life of God must perpetually reign in you. Gathered round you as a family, they are all to be so many motives, strong as the love you bear them, to make you Christ-like in your spirit. It must be seen and felt with them that religion is a first thing with you. And it must be first, not in words and talk, but visibly first in your love—that which fixes your aims, feeds your enjoyments, sanctifies your pleasures, supports your

trials, satisfies your wants, contents your ambition, beautifies and blesses your character. No mock piety, no sanctimony of phrase, or longitude of face on Sundays will suffice. You must live in the light of God, and hold such a spirit in exercise as you wish to see translated into your children. You must take them into your feelings as a loving and joyous element, and beget, if by the grace of God you may, the spirit of your own heart in theirs. This is Christian education, the nurture of the Lord."—*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.

#### *SIN CAUSES BODILY DISORDER.*

"Nor is anything better understood than that whatever vice of the mind—wounded pride, unregulated ambition, hatred, covetousness, fear, inordinate care—throws the mind out of rest, throws the body out of rest also. Thus it is that sin, in all its forms, becomes a power of bodily disturbance, shattering the nerves, inflaming the tissues, distempering the secretions, and brewing a general ferment of disease. In one view, the body is a kind of perpetual crystallization, and the crystal of true health cannot form itself under sin, because the body has, within, a perpetual agitating cause, which forbids the process.

"There is great reason also to suspect, so devastating is the power of moral evil, that the infections and deadly plagues of the world are somehow generated by this cause. They seem to have their spring in some new virus of death, and this new virus must have been somewhere and somehow distilled, or generated. We cannot refer them to mineral causes, or

vegetable, or animal, which are nearly invariable, and they seem, as they begin their spread at some given locality, to have a humanly personal origin."—*Nature and the Supernatural*, pp. 175, 176.

CORRESPONDENCE CLEARLY RECOGNIZED.

"God is the infinite beauty; and who can imagine, looking on this or that half dry and prosy scene of nature, that it represents the infinite beauty? The fact of creation argues no such thing. For what if it should happen to have been a part of God's design in the work to represent, not himself only as the pure and Perfect One, the immutable throne of law and universal order, but quite as truly, and in immediate proximity, to represent man to himself; that he may see both what he is for, and what he is, and struggle up out of one into the other. Then, or in that view, it would be the perfection of the world, taken in its moral adaptations, that it is not perfect, and does not answer to the beauty of the creative mind, save under the large qualification specified.

"The doctrine of types in the physical world, to represent conditions of character and changes of fortune in the spiritual, is only another conception of the same general truth. And this doctrine of types we know to be true in part; for language itself is possible only in virtue of the fact that physical types are provided, as bases of words, having each a natural fitness to represent some spiritual truth of human life; which is in fact the principal use and significance of language. Whence also it follows that if human life



is disordered, perverted, reduced to a condition of un-nature by sin, there must also be provided, as the necessary condition of language, types that represent so great a change; which is equivalent to saying that the fortunes of the outer world must, to some very great extent, follow the fortunes of the occupant and groan with him in his disorders.

"Thus we have growths in the briars and thorns that do not represent the beauty and benignity of God; but under his appointment take on their spiny ferocity from man, whose surroundings they are, and whose fortunes they are made to participate. The same may be said of loathsome and disgusting animals. Or we may take the pismire race for an example—a race of military vermin, who fight pitched battles and sometimes make slaves of their captives; representing nothing surely in God, save his purpose to reflect, in keenest mockery, the warlike chivalry and glory of man."—*Ibid.*, pp. 187, 189, 191.

#### INFLUENCE OF SPIRITS—GOOD AND EVIL.

"Then again, also, we recognize a vast and gloriously populated realm of angels and departed spirits, who, when they are sent, minister, unseen, about us; mixed, we know not how, in the surroundings of our state, with unsaintly and demoniacal powers of mischief, not sent nor suffered even to come, save when they are attracted by the low affinities we offer as open gates to their coming.

"I am well aware of the modern tendency to resolve what is said on this subject in the Scripture into

figures of speech, excluding all idea of a literal intermeddling of bad spirits. But that there are bad spirits, there is no more reason to doubt, than that there are bad men (who are in fact bad spirits) and as little that the bad spirits are spirits of mischief, and will act in character, according to their opportunity." *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 125.

THE SATAN OF SCRIPTURE.

"And then it follows that, the moment God creates a realm of powers, the bad possibility as certainly becomes a bad actuality, a Satan, or devil, *in esse*; not a bad omnipresence over against God, and his equal—that is a monstrous and horrible conception—but an outbreaking evil, or empire of evil in created spirits, according to their order. For Satan, or the devil, taken in the singular, is not the name of any particular person, neither is it a personation merely of temptation, or impersonal evil in the sense of moral evil; but the name is a name that generalizes bad persons or spirits, with their bad thoughts and characters, many in one. That there is any single one of them who, by distinction or pre-eminence, is called Satan, or devil, is wholly improbable. The name is one taken up by the imagination to designate or embody, in a conception the mind can most easily wield, the all or total of bad minds and powers.

"That the organic force of evil, therefore, has ever settled the eternal supremacy of some one spirit called devil, or Satan, is against the known nature of evil. There is no such order, allegiance, loyalty, faith,

in evil as that. The stability of Satan and his empire consists, not in the force of some personal chieftainship, but in the fixed array of all bad minds, and even of anarchy itself, against what is good."—*Ibid.*, pp. 134, 135, 136.

#### A FEW PRESS NOTICES.

The *New York Evangelist* says of "Nature and the Supernatural": "The work will rank very high among the literary and theological productions of the present century."

The *Christian Intelligencer* says: "The discussion is conducted with great ability. . . . It is a quiver full of arrows wherewith to defend the citadel of Truth against the assaults of science falsely so called."

The *New York Independent* says: "A noble monument of the earnest and talented author's production to religion, science and literature. . . . It should be among the first books selected by the minister in making up a library, however scanty."

The *North American Review* says: "The author has rendered a most important service to Christian Faith, both as regards the external facts of religion, and the more recondite experience of its true disciples."

The *New Englander* says: "We do not hesitate to pronounce it a magnificent book, a truly Christian book, and one pre-eminently adapted to the times in which we live."

## CHAPTER VII.

### TESTIMONY OF PROF. DRUMMOND, F.R.S.E., F.G.S.

WITH all lovers of the best and genuinely Christian literature of our times, the name of Henry Drummond has become a household word. His books are to be found in all the choicest libraries, are read and admired by the best men and women in all the Christian denominations, and are highly commended by both the secular and religious press.

Prof. Drummond has shown himself a man, not only of extensive learning and great scientific acquirements, but of deep religious experience and rare spiritual insight. His first and great work, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," was published in 1883, when he was only thirty-two years of age. "The book," we are told, "found at once a hearty response. It ran through thirty editions in England, and the presses are not yet still. It was republished in America; was translated into French, German, Dutch and Norwegian; and has already become a classic."

Five smaller but intensely interesting works by

him—given at first in a series of lectures at Oxford—have since appeared, the titles of which are :—

*The Greatest Thing in the World.*

*Pax Vobiscum* (Peace be With You).

*The Changed Life.*

*"First"; a Talk with Boys.*

*How to Learn How.*

The publication of the first of this series, it is said, "was instantly demanded. And slight as was the pamphlet in bulk, its success more than repeated the success of his first literary effort. Nearly a quarter of a million copies were sold in Great Britain alone. The second and third of the same series met with a sale equally extraordinary." These five works, which have already had a pretty wide circulation in pamphlet form, are now published in one very beautiful volume \* under the title of "Addresses by Drummond," with a biographical sketch of the author. And the publisher expresses his "confidence"—and the best men and women everywhere will unite in the hope—"that their merits will command millions of readers and prove a source of untold blessings."

Prof. Drummond rarely mentions the name of Swedenborg—only twice, I think, in his largest work. Yet his writings show that if he has not made him-

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\* For sale by the Swedenborg Publishing Association, Germantown, Pa. pp. 286. Price 75 cents, post-paid.

self familiar with the great Swede's teachings, he has somehow—possibly through his rare spiritual insight—caught their spirit, philosophy, and advanced religious thought in an extraordinary degree. And more than that, he has shown the solid, scientific basis of some of the leading New-Church doctrines, in a manner and with a clearness in which it has never been shown before. Consequently his books have nowhere found more ardent admirers than among the professed receivers of the New-Church doctrines. They are advertised in New-Church journals, and kept on sale at New-Church book-rooms; and one of the longest, most appreciative and laudatory reviews of his principal work that we have ever seen, was written by a professed New-Churchman, and published in a New-Church monthly.\* The review commences with these words:—

“Probably few works within the last thirty years have attracted as much notice, or been as extensively read by thoughtful people on both continents, as Drummond's ‘Natural Law in the Spiritual World.’ And this fact must be hailed by New-Churchmen as among the encouraging signs of our times. It shows the providential preparation which is going on for

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\* Boston *New Jerusalem Magazine*, November, 1885; June, 1886; in all, 19 pages.

the wide reception of the New-Church Theology, especially among independent and scientific thinkers."

And in his closing paragraph the reviewer says:—

"This book is altogether so remarkable, so replete with the New Christian thought, its positions are so thoroughly buttressed by the latest scientific discoveries, and its circulation among thoughtful people is so unprecedented, that we cannot think of dismissing it just yet."

And in the early part of his review this writer says:—

"We have read every line of Prof. Drummond's book twice, and a large portion of it three times, with absorbing interest. It is the first successful attempt we have seen . . . to show something like a solid, scientific basis for theology; and such a basis it must have if we expect it to win or retain the reverent regard of thoughtful and robust minds. . . . Though evincing a kind and friendly feeling toward all denominations of Christians, it is clear that its author sees very distinctly the defects and inconsistencies, the confusion and contradictions, in the reigning theology, and the great need there is of its doctrines being so modified as to bring them within the scope of the unperverted intellect, and in harmony with reason and known law."

On all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion—such as the doctrines of the Lord, the Atonement, Salvation, the Resurrection, Regeneration, Life, the nature and whereabouts of Heaven and Hell, the insufficiency of Faith alone, the supremacy of Love, the reign of Law in the spiritual as well as in the natural realm—on all these and many more Prof. Drummond's teaching is in such close agreement with that of Swedenborg that we feel warranted in classing him among the independent witnesses to the truth and value and spiritual helpfulness of the great seer's revealings. And the testimony would be none the less pertinent nor less strong, if he had never read a line of Swedenborg. We proceed to give a few extracts from his writings by way of illustration and confirmation of what is here said.

#### *ADULTERATIONS IN THEOLOGY.*

"If the removal of suspicion from Theology is of urgent moment, not less important is the removal of its adulterations. These suspicions, many of them at least, are new; in a sense they mark progress. But the adulterations are the artificial accumulations of centuries of uncontrolled speculation. They are the necessary result of the old method and the warrant for its revision—they mark the impossibility of



progress without the guiding and restraining hand of Law. The felt exhaustion of the former method, the want of corroboration for the old evidence, the protest of reason against the monstrous overgrowths which conceal the real lines of truth, these summon us to the search for a surer and more scientific system. With truths of the theological order, with dogmas which often depend for their existence on a particular exegesis, with propositions which rest for their evidence upon a balance of probabilities, or upon the weight of authority; with doctrines which every age and nation may make or unmake, which each sect may tamper with, and which even the individual may modify for himself, a second court of appeal has become an imperative necessity."—*Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, p. xix.

#### THE ORDINARY FORMS OF BELIEF.

"It is recognized by all that the younger and abler minds of this age find the most serious difficulty in accepting or retaining the ordinary forms of belief. Especially is this true of those whose culture is scientific. And the reason is palpable. No man can study modern Science without a change coming over his view of truth. What impresses him about Nature is its solidity. He is there standing upon actual

things, among fixed laws. And the integrity of the scientific method so seizes him that all other forms of truth begin to appear comparatively unstable. He did not know before that any form of truth could so hold him; and the immediate effect is to lessen his interest in all that stands on other bases. This he feels in spite of himself; he struggles against it in vain; and he finds, perhaps to his alarm, that he is drifting fast into what looks at first like pure Positivism. This is an inevitable result of the scientific training. . . .

"It is quite erroneous to suppose that science ever overthrows Faith, if by that is implied that any natural truth can oppose successfully any single spiritual truth. Science cannot overthrow Faith; but it shakes it [if it be not a true faith—B]. Its own doctrines, grounded in Nature, are so certain, that the truths of Religion, resting to most men on Authority, are felt to be strangely insecure. The difficulty, therefore, which men of Science feel about Religion is real and inevitable; and in so far as Doubt is a conscientious tribute to the inviolability of Nature, it is entitled to respect.

"None but those who have passed through it can appreciate the radical nature of the change wrought by Science in the whole mental attitude of its disciples. What they really cry out for in Religion is a

new standpoint—a standpoint like their own. The one hope, therefore, for Science is more Science.”—*Ibid.*, xx.

*REGENERATION—TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE.*

“The testimony of Nature to any Spiritual truth is of immense importance. Regeneration has not merely been an outstanding difficulty, but an overwhelming obscurity. Even to earnest minds the difficulty of grasping the truth at all has always proved extreme. Philosophically one scarcely sees either the necessity or the possibility of being born again. Why a virtuous man should not simply grow better and better until in his own right he enters the Kingdom of God, is what thousands honestly and seriously fail to understand. Now Philosophy cannot help us here. Her arguments are, if anything, against us. But Science answers to the appeal at once. If it be simply pointed out that this is the same absurdity as to ask why a stone should not grow more and more living till it enters the Organic World, the point is clear in an instant.

“What now, let us ask specifically, distinguishes a Christian man from a non-Christian man? Is it that he has certain mental characteristics not possessed by the other? Is it that certain faculties have

been trained in him, that morality assumes special and higher manifestations, and character a nobler form? Is the Christian merely an ordinary man who happens from birth to have been surrounded with a peculiar set of ideas? Is his religion merely that peculiar quality of the moral life defined by Mr. Matthew Arnold as 'morality touched by emotion'? And does the possession of a high ideal, benevolent sympathies, a reverent spirit, and a favorable environment account for what men call his Spiritual Life?

"The distinction between them is the same as that between the Organic and the Inorganic, the living and the dead. What is the difference between a crystal and an organism, a stone and a plant? They have much in common. Both are made of the same atoms. Both display the same properties of matter. Both are subject to the Physical Laws. Both may be very beautiful. But besides possessing all that the crystal has, the plant possesses something more—a mysterious something called Life. This Life is not something which existed in the crystal, only in a less developed form. There is nothing at all like it in the crystal. There is nothing like the first beginning of it in the crystal, not a trace or symptom of it. This plant is tenanted by something new, an original

and unique possession added over and above all the properties common to both.

“ When from vegetable Life we rise to animal Life, here again we find something original and unique—unique at least as compared with the mineral. From animal Life we ascend again to Spiritual Life. And here also is something new, something still more unique. He who lives the Spiritual Life has a distinct kind of Life added to all the other phases of Life which he manifests—a kind of Life infinitely more distinct than is the active Life of a plant from the inertia of a stone. The Spiritual man is more distinct in point of fact than is the plant from the stone. This is the one possible comparison in Nature, for it is the widest distinction in Nature; but compared with the difference between the Natural and the Spiritual the gulf which divides the organic from the inorganic is a hair’s-breadth. The natural man belongs essentially to this present order of things. He is endowed simply with a high quality of the natural animal Life. But it is Life of so poor a quality that it is not Life at all. He that hath not the Son, *hath not Life*; but he that hath the Son hath Life—a new and distinct and supernatural endowment. He is not of this world. He is of the timeless state, of Eternity.”—*Ibid.*, p. 79–82.

*THE SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL MAN.*

"The difference, then, between the Spiritual man and the Natural man is not a difference of development, but of generation. It is a distinction of quality, not of quantity. A man cannot rise by any natural development from 'morality touched by emotion,' to 'morality touched by Life.' Were we to construct a scientific classification, Science would compel us to arrange all natural men, moral or immoral, educated or vulgar, as one family. One might be high in the family group, another low; yet, practically, they are marked by the same set of characteristics—they eat, sleep, work, think, live, die. But the Spiritual man is removed from this family so utterly by the possession of an additional characteristic that a biologist, fully informed of the whole circumstances, would not hesitate a moment to classify him elsewhere. And if he really entered into these circumstances it would not be in another family but in another Kingdom. . . . This difference between the Living and the Dead in souls is so unproved by casual observation, so impalpable in itself, so startling as a doctrine, that schools of culture have ridiculed or denied the grim distinction. Nevertheless the grim distinction must be retained. It is a

scientific distinction. 'He that hath not the Son hath not Life.'

"Now it is this great Law which finally distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. It places the religion of Christ upon a footing altogether unique. There is no analogy between the Christian religion and, say, Buddhism or the Mohammedan religion. There is no true sense in which a man can say, He that hath Buddha hath Life. Buddha has nothing to do with Life. He may have something to do with morality. He may stimulate, impress, teach, guide, but there is no distinct new thing added to the souls of those who profess Buddhism. These religions *may* be developments of the natural, mental, or moral man. But Christianity professes to be more. It is the mental or moral man *plus* something else or some One else. It is the infusion into the Spiritual man of a New Life, of a quality unlike anything else in Nature. This constitutes the separate Kingdom of Christ, and gives to Christianity alone, of all the religions of mankind, the strange mark of Divinity."—*Ibid.*, p. 82-84.

#### SALVATION BY FORMULA.

"We confine ourselves also at present to that form which finds its encouragement in a single doctrine,

that doctrine being the Doctrine of the Atonement—let us say, rather, a perverted form of this central truth.

“The perverted Doctrine of the Atonement, which tends to beget the parasitic habit, may be defined in a single sentence—it is very much because it can be defined in a single sentence, that it is a perversion. Let us state it in a concrete form. It is put to the individual in the following syllogism: ‘You believe Christ died for sinners; you are a sinner; therefore Christ died for you; *and hence you are saved.*’ Now what is this but another species of molluscan shell? Could any trap for a benighted soul be more ingeniously planned? It is not superstition that is appealed to this time; it is reason. The agitated soul is invited to creep into the convolutions of a syllogism, and entrench itself behind a Doctrine more venerable even than the Church. But words are mere chitine. Doctrines may have no more vital contact with the soul than priest or sacrament, no further influence on life and character than stone and lime. And yet the apostles of parasitism pick a blackguard from the streets, pass him through this plausible formula, and turn him out a convert in the space of as many minutes as it takes to tell it.

“The zeal of these men, assuredly, is not to be questioned: their instincts are right, and their work



is often not in vain. It is possible, too, up to a certain point, to defend this Salvation by Formula. Are these not the very words of Scripture? Did not Christ Himself say, 'It is finished'? And is it not written, 'By grace are ye saved through faith,' 'Not of works, lest any man should boast,' and 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life'? To which, however, one might also answer in the words of Scripture, 'The Devils also believe,' and 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' But without seeming to make text refute text, let us ask rather what the supposed convert possesses at the end of the process. That Christ saves sinners, even blackguards from the streets, is a great fact; and that the simple words of the street evangelist do sometimes bring this home to man with convincing power is also a fact. But in ordinary circumstances, when the inquirer's mind is rapidly urged through the various stages of the above piece of logic, he is left to face the future and blot out the past with a formula of words.

"To be sure, these words may already convey a germ of truth, they may yet be filled in with a wealth of meaning and become a lifelong power. But we would state the case against Salvation by Formula with ignorant and unwarranted clemency did we for a moment convey the idea that this is

always the actual result. The doctrine plays too well into the hands of the parasitic tendency to make it possible that in more than a minority of cases the result is anything but disastrous."—*Ibid.*, p. 331, '2.

### LOVE IS THE SUPREME THING.

"Eternal life is to know God, and God is love. This is Christ's own definition. Ponder it. 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' Love must be eternal. It is what God is. On the last analysis, then, love is life. Love never faileth, and life never faileth, so long as there is love. That is the philosophy of what Paul is showing us; the reason why in the nature of things Love should be the supreme thing—because it is going to last; because in the nature of things it is an Eternal Life. It is a thing that we are living now, not that we get when we die; that we shall have a poor chance of getting when we die unless we are living now. No worse fate can befall a man in this world than to live and grow old alone, unloving, and unloved. To be lost is to live in an unregenerate condition, loveless and unloved; and to be saved is to love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth already in God. For God is Love. . . .

“‘Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself.’ Get these ingredients into your life. Then everything that you do is eternal. It is worth doing. It is worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep; and to fulfil the condition required demands a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement in any direction, bodily or mental, requires preparation and care. Address yourselves to that one thing; at any cost have this transcendent character exchanged for yours. You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those round about you, things too trifling to speak about, but which you feel have entered into your eternal life. I have seen almost all the beautiful things God has made; I have enjoyed almost every pleasure that He has planned for man; and yet as I look back I see standing out above all the life that has gone four or five short experiences when the love of God reflected itself in some poor imitation, some small act of love of mine, and these seem to be the things which alone of all one's life

abide. Everything else in all our lives is transitory. Every other good is visionary. But the acts of love which no man knows about, or can ever know about—they never fail.”—*Addresses* p. 70.

#### THE FINAL TEST OF RELIGION.

“In the Book of Matthew, where the Judgment Day is depicted for us in the imagery of One seated upon a throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, ‘How have I believed?’ but ‘How have I loved?’ The test of religion, the final test of religion, is not religiousness, but Love. I say the final test of religion at that great Day is not religiousness, but Love; not what I have done, not what I have believed, not what I have achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, *by sins of omission*, we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we never knew Him, that for us He lived in vain. It means that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all our lives, that we were not once near enough to Him to be seized with the spell of His compassion for the world. It means that—

“‘I lived for myself, I thought for myself.

For myself, and none beside—

Just as if Jesus had never lived,

As if He had never died.’

“No other charge than lovelessness shall be preferred in the final Judgment Day. Be not deceived. The words which all of us shall one Day hear, sound not of theology but of life; not of churches and saints, but of the hungry and the poor; not of creeds and doctrines, but of shelter and clothing; not of Bibles and prayer-books, but of cups of cold water in the name of Christ. Thank God the Christianity of to-day is coming nearer the world's need. Live to help that on.”—*Addresses* p. 74.

*THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CAUSAL—NOT CASUAL.*

“There is one kind of cause for every particular effect, and no other; and if one particular effect is desired, the corresponding cause must be set in motion. It is no use proposing finely devised schemes, or going through general pious exercises in the hope that somehow Rest will come. The Christian life is not casual, but causal. All nature is a standing protest against the absurdity of expecting to secure spiritual effects, or any effects, without the employment of appropriate causes. The Great Teacher

dealt what ought to have been the final blow to this infinite irrelevancy by a single question, 'Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?'

"Why, then, did the Great Teacher not educate His followers fully? Why did He not tell us, for example, how such a thing as Rest might be obtained? The answer is that *He did*. But plainly, explicitly, in so many words? Yes, plainly, explicitly, in so many words. He assigned Rest to its cause, in words with which each of us has been familiar from his earliest childhood.

"He begins, you remember—for you at once know the passage I refer to—almost as if Rest could be had without any cause: 'Come unto Me,' He says, 'and I will *give* you Rest.'

"Rest, apparently, was a favor to be bestowed; men had but to come to Him; He could give it to every applicant. But the next sentence takes that all back. The qualification, indeed, is added instantaneously. For what the first sentence seemed to give was next thing to an impossibility. For how, in a literal sense, can Rest be *given*? One could no more give away Rest than he could give away Laughter. We speak of 'causing' laughter, which we can do; but we cannot give it away. When we speak of giving pain, we know perfectly well we cannot give pain away. And when we aim at giving pleasure,

all that we do is to arrange a set of circumstances in such a way as that these shall cause pleasure. Of course there is a sense, and a very wonderful sense, in which a Great Personality breathes upon all who come within its influence an abiding peace and trust. Men can be to other men as the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. Much more Christ; much more Christ as Perfect Man; much more still as Saviour of the World. But it is not this of which I speak. When Christ said He would give men Rest, He meant simply that He would put them in the way of it. By no act of conveyance would or could He make over His own Rest to them. He could give them His receipt for it. That was all. But He would not make it for them; for one thing, it was not in His plan to make it for them; for another thing, men were not so planned that it could be made for them; and for yet another thing, it was a thousand times better that they should make it for themselves.

“That this is the meaning becomes obvious from the wording of the second sentence: ‘Learn of Me and ye shall *find* Rest.’ Rest, that is to say, is not a thing that can be given, but a thing to be *acquired*. It comes not by an act, but by a process. It is not to be found in a happy hour, as one finds a treasure; but slowly, as one finds knowledge. It could indeed be no more found in a moment than could knowledge. A

soil has to be prepared for it. Like a fine fruit, it will grow in one climate and not in another; at one altitude and not at another. Like all growths it will have an orderly development and mature by slow degrees."—*Addresses* p. 95.

#### CHRIST THE ALPHA AND OMEGA.

The following is a portion of a passage in "The Changed Life," which Prof. Drummond quotes with strong approval from the speech of a distinguished Christian statesman. "They are the words," he says, "of one of the highest intellects this age has known—a man who shared the burdens of his country as few have done, and who, not in the shadows of old age, but in the high noon of his success, gave this confession to the world:"—

"Many men have educated themselves by reading Plutarch's Lives of the Ancient Worthies, and setting before themselves one and another of these that in different ages have achieved celebrity; and they have recognized the great power of these men on themselves. Now I do not perceive that poet, or philosopher, or reformer, or general, or any other great man, ever has dwelt in my imagination and in my thought as the simple Jesus has. For more than twenty-five years I instinctively have gone to Christ to draw a measure and a rule for everything. Whenever there



has been a necessity for it, I have sought—and at last almost spontaneously—to throw myself into the companionship of Christ; and early, by my imagination, I could see Him standing and looking quietly and lovingly upon me. There seemed almost to drop from His face an influence upon me that suggested what was the right thing in the controlling of passion, in the subduing of pride, in the overcoming of selfishness; and it is from Christ, manifested to my inward eye, that I have consciously derived more ideals, more models, more influences, than from any human character whatever.

“That is not all. I feel conscious that I have derived from the Lord Jesus Christ every thought that makes heaven a reality to me, and every thought that paves the road that lies between me and heaven. All my conceptions of the progress of grace in the soul; all the steps by which divine life is evolved; all the ideals that overhang the blessed sphere which awaits us beyond this world—these are derived from the Saviour. The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.

“That is not all. Much as my future includes all these elements which go to make the blessed fabric of earthly life, yet, after all, what the summer is compared with all its earthly products—flowers, and leaves, and grass—that is Christ compared with all the products of Christ in my mind and in my soul. All the flowers and leaves of sympathy; all the twining joys that come from my heart as a Christian—these I take and hold in the future, but they are to me what the flowers and leaves of summer are compared with the sun that

makes the summer. Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of my better life."

"There have been times when I have had an unspeakable heart-hunger for Christ's love. My sense of sin is never strong when I think of the law; my sense of sin is strong when I think of love—if there is any difference between law and love. It is when drawing near the Lord Jesus Christ, and longing to be loved, that I have the most vivid sense of unsymmetry, of imperfection, of absolute unworthiness, and of my sinfulness. Character and conduct are never so vividly set before me as when in silence I bend in the presence of Christ, revealed not in wrath, but in love to me. I never so much long to be lovely, that I may be loved, as when I have this revelation of Christ before my mind.

"In looking back upon my experience, that part of my life which stands out, and which I remember most vividly, is just that part that has had some conscious association with Christ. All the rest is pale, and thin, and lies like clouds on the horizon. Doctrines, systems, measures, methods—what may be called the necessary mechanical and external part of worship; the part which the senses would recognize—this seems to have withered and fallen off like leaves of last summer; but that part which has taken hold of Christ abides."—*Addresses* p. 189.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### TESTIMONY OF REV. GEORGE T. FLANDERS.

NOT many years ago a volume of rare interest and ability was published by Mr. Flanders (at first anonymously) under the title of "Life's Problems, Here and Hereafter." It has had a large sale and been received with marked favor by the more advanced Christians of nearly every denomination, and produced a profound impression on many thoughtful minds. And we can easily believe the publishers when they say: "We are in constant receipt of letters from unbelievers, doubters, misbelievers, the perplexed and afflicted, testifying to the great help and comfort its perusal has afforded them. It has supplanted unbelief, doubt, and perplexity with faith, trust, and hope." And although no mention is made of Swedenborg, the volume is literally crammed full with the new truths revealed in his writings. On all the principal doctrines of the Christian religion, he is in such perfect agreement with the illustrious Swede as to warrant the belief that he had faithfully studied his writings and cordially accepted most if not all of his teachings. We could easily fill forty pages with

illustrative and confirmatory passages, but must forego that pleasure and confine ourselves to a few brief extracts. We begin with a quotation from the author's "Prelude," in which he gives us a little of his spiritual autobiography :—

*DIFFICULTIES FINALLY MASTERED.*

"If, indeed, man be immortal, if, essentially, man is a spirit,—what is spirit? Is it something? Or is it nothing? Is spirit a real, substantial entity, that, under certain conditions, may be seen, touched, felt, and handled? The popular idea of spirit is the exact reverse of this,—is as near the idea of nothing as well can be. But from this semi-nihilism I instinctively revolted. I could not abide the thought of my dear ones and myself,

‘Made up of moon-beams floating dim,  
And wreaths of misty light.’

"I was beset with multitudinous questions about Heaven, its topography, dimensions, scenery, and location in space. Does it resemble this old world of ours? Do the aged forever remain aged? Do infants forever remain infants? Is union between husband and wife perpetuated there? Of course, I was unable to answer these questions, and I dealt with them summarily—I cast them out. To the really sincere inquirer I said—‘Who knows? Who can know?’ I

had no proof to offer to others ; I had no proof for myself,—proof that stood firmly on the feet of reason and fact. . . . .

“At the age of twenty-four my mental perplexity reached a climax, and I was at the parting of the ways. The change that then came over me may be briefly told.

“Chance, as I then believed, drew my attention to certain psychological facts, and led up to a series of investigations that eventuated in the complete solution of my difficulties. Light broke in from unsuspected sources. Truth sprang from hitherto unknown springs. On purely rational and historical grounds my doubts were vanquished, and at last I was free—free to speak with the positiveness of absolute certainty—free to do my duty to man and to God.

“I did not gain this vantage-ground at a single bound. It was six long years before I could command the field of my difficulties and feel a sense of mastery. The mists rose slowly and dissolved in the pure ether. But soon ‘every valley was exalted, every hill was brought low, the crooked was made straight, the rough places were made smooth,’ and no soul was ever more at rest ‘in Ashlu, at the pools of peace.’ It is true I saw, as all mortal men are fated to see, ‘through a glass darkly ;’ but to this day the truth remains unshaken and unimpaired,—I *saw*.

“ Perfectly aware that there are many clergymen, and thousands of men and women in and outside of the churches, who are involved in doubts, difficulties, and perplexities similar to those that once enthralled me and made me wretched, I propose to set forth in the pages following the way and the means by which my doubts were silenced, difficulties overcome, perplexities cleared up, and I was made to know that God is, that man is immortal, that our personality permanently endures, that a real, substantial world awaits each man, woman, and child at death, that we shall know each other and ultimately be united as one family, that times, seasons, and events flow in the harmonious order of an ever beneficent Providence that reigns supremely and works solely for human good. It is a large part of my purpose to make the reader an independent thinker and investigator, by simply giving him the key and showing him the way.

“ Let it be borne in mind through every stage of the discussions following that the author is truthfully telling his own unvarnished story, and that the whole may be taken as a sort of modern Pilgrim’s Progress from the city of Doubt, through the slough of Difficulty, and from thence on and up to the Summit of the Celestial Mountains ” (p. 11-15).

## HIS IDEA OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

Quoting Paul's saying, that "the *invisible* things of God are clearly seen, being understood by *the things that are made*," Mr. Flanders concludes "that the spiritual world must as closely resemble its material base, as the spiritual man closely resembles, in form and feature, his material body"—that "the things in heaven have form, as do those on earth;" and he adds:—

"Topographically speaking, the spiritual world, like the material world, has great variety of scenery and every conceivable form of adaptation and use. Its conditions are flexible to every mood and to every need. Hill, mountain, and plain; trees, shrubs, and flowers; lake, river, and ocean, are all there as the natural belongings of that incomparable sphere. There is beauty for the lover of the beautiful; grandeur and sublimity to expand and lift the soul in adoration of its Creator; exquisite harmony of objects, colors, sounds, to charm away all discordant thoughts; adaptation to lead to unbroken content and peace; and in everything wisdom, goodness, and love. There is a place for every one, and *every one is in his proper place*" (p. 99).

Nor does this writer believe that the inhabitants of

the spiritual world are unemployed, or without opportunity for the exercise and further unfolding of all their faculties. He says :—

“ Nor are the humblest souls without an appropriate stage for their abilities and development. The fields await the gardens of fragrance and bowers of beauty ; and country and hamlet, town and city, the nobler architecture of a better and happier world. Whether it be hand-work or brain-work, ‘ all work is worship ’ and brings joy ; and the world of souls is as full of busy industry as it is with the glory of the Lord. No time is wasted in aimless lingering around the throne or playing on golden harps. We shall carry thither our limbs, our hands and feet, our eyes and ears, our brain with all its marvelous faculties and possibilities ; and these imply a sphere for their effective use. Our personality preserved, and all else follows as a matter of course ” (p. 100).

He believes, too, that the objective world in the spiritual realm must be in correspondence or harmony with the internal states of its denizens ; and for the righteous, therefore, vastly superior in beauty and loveliness to this material realm :—

“ I was able to approximate an idea of the superiority of the spiritual world to our material world,



on reflecting that the agreeability and adaptation of any given locality depend upon the degree of harmony that exists between our interior state and exterior surroundings. There is scarcely a place upon the earth's surface that would not be agreeable and enjoyable if one were in perfect harmony with external objects and associated with agreeable and concordant minds. Choose, then, some favored spot where nature, in every aspect, is at her best; where the soul is in perfect fellowship with all it sees, hears, and feels, and every rational desire is fully gratified; and is it not certain that unspeakable happiness and contentment would ensue? And such, at least, is the *state* and *place* of the pure and just in the realm of souls. As it is written: 'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the glory that God hath prepared for those who love him!'" (p. 101).

Nor does he believe that the spiritual world is a misty, shadowy, unsubstantial realm—far from it:—

"And, best of all, it is REAL. The spiritual world is no fanciful fog-bank, no unorganized ideal mist, no fantastic, delusive mirage. Its life is home life; its deepest joys are home-joys. Many of our relatives and friends are already there. They have never

ceased to love us, and yearn for our presence among them; and when we shall have reached their lovely dwelling-place, they will receive us with demonstrations of inexpressible delight."

*"OTHER WORLD ORDER."*

This is the title of chapter IX in "Life's Problems." Having reached the conclusion that "a spiritual world *is*"—a real and substantial world into which we are consciously introduced "through the gateway of death"—the author proceeds to consider what must be its social arrangements, and according to what law known to people on earth its inhabitants must be distributed. And "while engaged on a solution of the main question," his mind "underwent a process of gradual development," and the following are some of the conclusions "ultimately reached" by him—identical, be it observed, with the laws and other-world social order revealed through Swedenborg more than a century ago.

"All men are not equally developed intellectually, morally, or spiritually, nor are all equally holy and happy immediately after death. Their place in the social organization of the spiritual world is determined by the variety and quality of their moral and

intellectual state. The proof sustaining this proposition is specific and irresistible. It is, in part, contained in the following particulars:—

“Variety and diversity, I perceived, result from far-reaching and uniform laws. The least of things, as well as the largest, are under their inflexible control. Diversity of parentage—the almost infinite variety of souls—the manifold degrees of development in respect to culture and refinement, morally and intellectually—imply not only exterior, but *interior* conditions that are irreversible and ineradicable. The forms of life, from the lowest to the highest degree, disclose no exception. We are justified, therefore, on grounds of strictly scientific deduction, in concluding that, beyond our mortal ken, there is no exception even to the uttermost limit” (p. 109).

“I saw, too, that without variety and diversity, separate or differentiated existence would be impossible. If each particular thing and creature were, in every respect, precisely alike, they would inevitably seek a common level and to occupy a single focus. That road leads to chaos.

“It was also apparent that one of the most essential features of creation, physically and morally, would be wanting if creation were devoid of beauty. Physical beauty depends upon form and color, light and shade, in infinite variety. Intellectual and moral

beauty depend upon purity, truth, and love, manifested in infinite variety and combination of ideas, affections, and actions. Without these forms of beauty, whether here or hereafter, the formation of a pure and symmetrical character and the attainment of perfect happiness would be impossible. If creation were without variety, it would not only be devoid of use to beings such as we are, but 'stale, flat, and unprofitable' to an unbearable degree. While I could not conceive of the spiritual world as in any way different, externally, from this world, it was also evident that personal peculiarity is continued there, in all its variety and diversity, even to the minutest particular" (pp. 111, 112).

"Our present social state, whether in civilized or semi-civilized communities, is made possible, and its imperfect order maintained, by the careful observance of such distinctions as spring from morals and culture. From the highest virtue to the lowest vice, from great enlightenment to the profoundest ignorance, from Christian civilization to the most beastly barbarism, from faith in God and man to cold-blooded nihilism, society shades off by almost imperceptible degrees. But disregard all lines of separation, sink out of sight all social, moral, and intellectual distinctions, and confusion and anarchy would be the inevitable result. We may be sure that in the spiritual world

these lines of separation are not disregarded, but are strictly observed. No system of spiritual communism prevails there !

“ The tendencies of modern society, instead of being in the direction of laxity, are steadily moving towards a more severe definition of its diverse and often antagonistic elements, and the formation of distinct social centres. Everywhere, under the action of uniform laws, like is seeking like. Refinement is seeking refinement, culture is seeking culture, spirituality is seeking spirituality, wickedness and vulgarity are seeking wickedness and vulgarity, and the movement is yearly accelerating. In the words of a homely proverb, ‘ Birds of a feather flock together ; ’ and, as one result of our present ignorance of each other, coupled often with a disregard of moral principles, the different flocks sometimes get badly intermixed ” (p. 114).

“ How is social organization in the spiritual world effected? Precisely on the same principles, and by the action of the same laws, as here ; in a word, on the basis of attraction, enforced by absolute knowledge of each other. We have not only the authority of the Bible, but of common sense, to assure us that in that world our power of perception will be greatly enlarged and advanced, and we shall not only ‘ see face to face,’ but ‘ *know even as we are known !* ’ The

startling significance of these words may be thus illustrated:—

“Suppose that to-morrow morning everybody should be permitted to know as much about every person within their acquaintance as they do about themselves. How many friendships that would not be broken? How many business relations that would not be severed? How many marriage connections that would not be immediately intolerable? Is it not certain that the majority of old relations would speedily break up, and new relations be formed? Society would be reconstructed, as quickly as possible, on the basis of actual affinities, and heaven and hell on earth, not intermixed, but rigidly defined and separate, would be the inevitable result.

“I did not forget, here, that God rules by law, and not from caprice. Choice is effected by the silent action of law operating from within, and no violence is done to individual preferences and attractions. Each goes willingly and cheerfully ‘to his own place,’ and therefore by choice, and is as happy in his choice as conditions and capacity permit.

“Something like this is daily transpiring here in our common life. Without violence, and mostly without force from without, men and women are silently asserting and following their preferences. Political parties are formed on the basis of political prefer-

ence. Creeds are accepted from choice. Churches, often antagonistic in doctrine and discipline, are monuments of the irrepressible law that aggregates likes and establishes lines of fellowship. Chemical affinity, so imperious in determining the association of particles and the forms of matter, moves upward a degree, and is equally imperious in determining social and other forms of association. Can it be that the law of association is less imperious on the higher plane of the spirit life? If the most interior reality of each individual life were laid bare, if every thought, word, and act were brought to judgment, how long would that festering debauchee, that satined and jeweled harlot, that millionaire whose wealth was begotten in narrowness and meanness, that impersonation of supreme selfishness and conceit, hold their places in popular respect and on the uppermost seats of society? How long would that gilded and sanctimonious hypocrite stand in pulpit, or sit at ease in pew of a fashionable church? Once known, they would gravitate to their kind" (pp. 116-18).

#### *A SUMMARY OF HIS CONCLUSIONS.*

And the author sums up the conclusions he has reached, and which he justly considers "rationally undeniable," in the manner following:—

" 1. Man is man as to his spirit, and therefore lives as man after death. This fact is proven by a great mass of scientific and historical evidence,—notably by the appearance of Christ, Moses, Elias, and many others, who were seen as men, women, and children ; although in many cases they had long been dead,—Moses, seven hundred years.

" 2. The material body of man neither thinks, conceives, originates, wills, feels, nor acts of itself. Its manifestations, of whatever character, originate with and are dependent upon the spiritual man, woman, or child within it. This is proven by the absolute cessation of all physical and intellectual manifestations through its agency after its death.

" 3. Physical, intellectual, and moral manifestations pertain to man only as a *spirit* ; therefore whatever is achieved or gained,—character, good or bad, ignorance or intelligence, habit or tendency,—is the sole property of his spirit, and necessarily accompanies him after death.

" 4. Character is not a physical, but a *moral* formation ; nor does a man lose his character by dying.

" 5. Conditions of happiness or misery always attend on character ; therefore conditions of happiness or misery attend a man after death.

" 6. Character, attainments, tendencies, tastes, have almost infinite variety of gradation ; therefore almost



infinite gradation of happiness or misery attend on character" (pp. 125-6).

*LITTLE CHILDREN AFTER DEATH.*

Again, Swedenborg tells us that those who die in infancy "are raised up immediately after death, taken into heaven, and committed to the care of angels of the female sex who in the life of the body loved little children tenderly, and at the same time loved God. And because these angels, while in the world, loved all little children from a sort of maternal tenderness, they receive them as their own; and the little ones love them as their own mothers." And he proceeds to tell how judiciously, tenderly, and lovingly they are treated, how wisely they are educated and governed, and how fully and harmoniously all their noblest powers are developed and their natural selfish propensities repressed. And all this, remember, from positive knowledge obtained by long and open intercourse with the spiritual world.

Look, now, at the conclusion which the author of the "Problems" has reached on the same subject, by study, reflection, and the exercise of his logical powers:—

"Nearly one half the human race die in infancy. They enter the spiritual world weak, helpless, igno-

rant of themselves, and of pretty much everything else they need to know. Undeveloped physically, mentally, spiritually, they need there, as much as they needed here, the constant care and instruction of parents, or of those competent to care for them. Are they neglected and left to shift for themselves? Said Jesus: 'It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish.' 'Their angels do ever behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.'

"These motherless immortals are undoubtedly cared for, and carefully trained up to the beauty and glory of immortal manhood and womanhood; in a word, to an equality with the angels. Thousands of mothers are entering the spirit-world whose hearts yearn for the little ones they left behind them; why should they not find solace in the adoption and care of some little spirit-orphan whose parents, perhaps for long years to come, must remain on the earth? And something more than solace; for what can be more congenial and indispensable to their future happiness than the charge of these helpless innocents? How often here a bereaved mother finds comfort and solace in the adoption of some motherless babe. Many a sorrowing mother could be resigned to her bereavement could she be made to realize that her helpless infant is loved and cared for in the world immortal

by some mother in whom the love of little children is a deathless passion. Mothers have died resignedly and peacefully because assured that their little ones would be treated tenderly, and provided with everything necessary for their health, education, and happiness.

"We must believe that the care, education, physical and moral training of little children is a marked feature of the after-death life. From no other point of view can we successfully vindicate the moral justice and benevolence of God" (pp. 165-7).

Swedenborg further learned from open intercourse with the spiritual world that those who die in infancy or childhood continue to *grow* in that world till they attain the full stature of men and women. And when, perhaps many years after, their mothers enter the spiritual world and desire to see their offspring, now grown to the fullness of the human stature, these latter are remitted into their infantile state, and consequently take on the precise form they had when they left this world, and so are instantly recognized by their mothers. Then, in the presence and before the eyes of their mothers, they pass rapidly through all the stages of development till they arrive at their present state of maturity, and, of course, are recognized by their mothers at every stage as their own children,

precisely as they would have been had they lived and grown to manhood or womanhood here on earth.

And the author of the "Problems" arrives at a similar conclusion respecting the main fact—viz., their growth to maturity in the spiritual world. He says:—

"It seems to me clear that facts in physiology and in psychology, together with logical deductions from the perfections of God, point unmistakably to the attainment in the immortal life of physical and mental perfection; in other words, to the attainment of Immortal Youth."

#### DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

"There is then no chance, no fate, no absolute fixedness, pertaining to human affairs or to human life. But nothing is 'left at loose ends.' An Infinite Divine Providence everywhere presides. 'A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice;' and to say that it 'numbers the hairs of our head' is only significant of its infinite minuteness. As generals comprehend particulars, it is not only in all generals, but also in all particulars. And so it is *exterior* and *interior*; universal and minute. And everywhere it acts for ends of use. It is building the human race

up into a glorious, blessed heaven, and it cannot be diverted from this object. It makes 'the wrath of man to praise the Lord, and the remainder thereof,'—all beyond that use,—'it restrains.' It is always busy and always accessible. It modifies here, and enlarges there, and is, what its name implies,—Divine Providence. In a word,—*it is our Heavenly Father acting a Father's part toward all his intelligent creatures*" (p. 259-60).

#### THE VERDICT OF REASON.

The old theologies, because of the unreasonableness of many of the doctrines, have insisted on the exclusion of reason from the domain of religion, and taught that the understanding is to be held in subjection to faith. But the New Christianity repudiates this dogma, and insists on the faithful exercise of the rational faculty in religious as in all other inquiries. The herald of the New Jerusalem never encourages a blind belief, nor asks our assent to an unreasonable doctrine. Though never exalting reason above Revelation, he would, nevertheless, have us regard it as one of the noblest gifts of God, and exercise it freely and reverently in determining the true meaning of Revelation. He insists that religious truth is to be *rationally* received, or *seen to be truth* before it is accepted; that a blind faith, or the unthinking accept-

ance of the mere *dictum* of others, "is not faith, but only a persuasion." "What is truth not seen," he asks, "but a voice not understood?" Even "in heaven," he adds, "no one believes any truth unless he *sees* it," or apprehends it by his rational faculty. And this is precisely the ground taken and resolutely and ably maintained by the author of the "Problems." In his chapter on "Results," after the rational considerations presented in support of the conclusions he had reached, he adds:—

"Such is the verdict of reason! Why not pause here, I said, and go no further? Reason needs no support from without; why carry the case to another tribunal? Most men respect the verdict of reason; but Christian people are apt to feel the need of additional support from Revelation. Reason and Revelation, when their final verdict is made up, have always been found to be in perfect agreement. It is well for Revelation that they are not in conflict; for the day has gone by when Revelation could be made to stand against reason, and command the credence of sensible and educated people. It should be remembered, moreover, that Revelation has received from reason its strongest supports and defences. When the two are united touching any one thing, their testimony is sure to prevail. Are they united in the verdict ren-

dered, as we have seen, by Reason? We shall see" (p. 173).

#### *HIS VIEW OF THE OLD CREEDS.*

"I have brought forward the most important and the most difficult questions in theology and philosophy and subjected them to a purely rational treatment. In no single instance have I appealed to authority—in Bible or Church—to sustain or enforce my conclusions. My sole reliance has been on pure reason and historical fact. If occasionally I have cited texts of Scripture, it was simply to show the harmony of the evidence. I have thus endeavored to meet the skeptic on the one hand and the Christian on the other.

"I am convinced that a stubbornly skeptical attitude of mind is a great misfortune. The curse of the modern Christian church is skepticism. The old creeds are fading out, and too often Christianity is identified with the creeds. As a consequence the churches are honeycombed with unbelief, and the people are not fed. If God with thunderbolts and an endless gehenna is a mistake, they seriously ask,—is there a God? If the future life is not a scene of devastated family circles and broken ties, they plead,—is there a future life? What is the meaning of Scripture texts so long used to support these theories, if they have not been correctly understood? Is the Bible a truthful book?

"Of secret doubt and untold difficulty all along these lines, there is a vast amount. For the most part the pulpit is silent, and for the most part the pulpit does not know what to say. Is it to be wondered at that the churches are thinly attended? That the pews are only partially filled? Is it not time to look at Christianity, as represented by the Bible, from a different standpoint, and see if it has not a side in strict harmony with educated reason and conscience, and in no wise contradictory of any known fact or law?

"I have endeavored to show that Christianity has such a side. I am a Christian—at least technically—but it is because my reason has made me one. If my faith is not rational, it is nothing. But I am in no bondage to a system. My Christian convictions are in accord with all else I know. They present no obstacle to my liberty of faith or research. I would therefore make the reader a Christian on the terms that I am one" (pp. 315-17).



## CHAPTER IX.

### MANY WITNESSES NOT YET SUMMONED.

**T**HERE is much more indirect testimony to the truth, value, and spiritual helpfulness of Swedenborg's teachings, which we are compelled to omit. To insert it all would require a more extended research than we have time to make. And even that portion with which we are already familiar would—if only a moderate fraction of it were given—swell the present volume to a size greatly beyond the dimensions contemplated, and beyond what is needed to accomplish our purpose.

By “indirect testimony” we mean the testimony of those whose writings are imbued with the large, free, catholic, and Christian spirit of the Church signified by the New Jerusalem, and which teach most, if not all, of the fundamental doctrines of this Church, but without ever mentioning Swedenborg by name or using any of his terminology. Some of these writers are known to be, and others to have been, readers of his writings; but some of them may have received the truths they teach by a kind of spiritual instinct, or through that spiritual perception which is vouchsafed

in a greater or less degree of clearness to all the humble and devoted followers of the Lord. As it is written: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." And this is often and plainly taught by Swedenborg. We cite one or two passages in confirmation of this:—

"Every one is enlightened and informed from the Word according to his affection for truth and the degree of his desire thereof, and according to his faculty of receiving. They who are in illustration are in the light of heaven as to their internal man; for the light of heaven is what enlightens men in the goods and truths of faith. They who are thus illumined apprehend the interior meaning of the Word; therefore they make for themselves doctrine from the Word, to which they apply the sense of the letter. But they who are not in the affection of truth from good, and thence in the desire of growing wise, are more blinded than illumined when they read the Word, for they are not in the light of heaven; and from the light of the world, which is called the lumen of nature, they see only such things as are in agreement with those of the world; and thus, from the fallacies in which the external senses are, they lay hold of falsities which appear to them as truths. Hence the greater part of them . . . abide in the sense of the letter, which they

apply to favor falsities, especially such as are in agreement with the loves of self and of the world. But they who are not of this character merely confirm the doctrinals of their own church, neither do they know or care whether these be true or not.”—*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 9382.

“They who are in good and desire truth have perception and are enlightened when they read the Word, and so are taught from the Word. But they who are not in good cannot be taught from the Word, but can only be confirmed in such things as they have been instructed in from infancy, whether those things be true or false. The reason why they who are in good have revelation [that is, spiritual enlightenment], and they who are in evil have not, is, that all and singular things in the Word in its internal sense treat of the Lord and his Kingdom, and the angels attendant on man perceive the internal sense of the Word; this is communicated to the man who is in good and reads the Word and desires truth from affection; hence he has illustration and perception. For with those who are in good, and thence in the affection of truth, the intellectual principle of the mind is open into heaven, and their soul, that is, their internal man, is in consort with the angels.”—*Ibid.*, n. 8695.

In the light of this teaching we see that those who truly acknowledge the Lord—for only such are really “in good”—and earnestly desire the truth, have a perception of the spiritual and true sense of the Word when they read it with such desire; and this, too, without having read any of Swedenborg’s revealings—though with the help of these they might receive the truth in greater fullness. We do not claim, therefore, that all the advanced religious thought of to-day is to be credited directly to the writings of Swedenborg; but the testimony of its teachers to the truth and value of these writings is none the less pertinent or potent on that account.

Among the names of the large class of witnesses here referred to, but not summoned, may be mentioned such eminent divines as Frederick W. Robertson, George McDonald, Canon Farrar, John Caird, John Pulsford, William Ellery Channing, Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Abbott, Andrew P. Peabody, and David Swing. It would be easy to fill a volume larger than the present one with extracts from the writings of these men, containing most, if not all, of the essential doctrines of the New Church as taught in the writings of Swedenborg, and thoroughly imbued with their catholic and Christian spirit. And notwithstanding the opposition which some of these writers have had to encounter from the more conservative or

less progressive class of Christians, their writings are much more extensively read by the intelligent and progressive men and women of to-day, than are those that breathe the spirit and uphold the doctrinal theology of a half century ago. And so their writings and the great multitude of their readers and admirers help to swell to gigantic proportions the cloud of witnesses to the truth, value, and spiritual helpfulness of Swedenborg's teachings.

## CHAPTER X.

### TESTIMONY OF A HUNDRED OTHER MINISTERS.

FOR the last two decades the cloud of witnesses to the truth, value, and spiritual helpfulness of Swedenborg's religious teachings, has increased in volume with wonderful celerity, yet scarcely perceptible to the popular gaze. It is well, and in perfect accord with the laws of divine order, that its increase has been so quiet and unobserved. For the spiritual goods and truths with which these teachings are all aglow, are the light and warmth of the New Jerusalem "coming down from God out of heaven." And what is the New Jerusalem when brought down to our present plane of existence, but the Lord's kingdom here on earth? (See A. C., 402, 940; N. J. D., 95). And this kingdom, we are told, "cometh not with observation."

### *EXTRACTS FROM A HUNDRED LETTERS.*

During the last decade the writer has had a pretty extensive correspondence with members, and especially ministers, of the various Christian denomina-

tions, concerning the claims of Swedenborg and the truth and value of his teachings. Many New-Church books have been ordered and sent them from time to time ; but generally those known as "collateral works of the Church"—works designed to explain, elucidate, and confirm the doctrines taught by Swedenborg—have proved to be most satisfactory, and most successful in convincing their readers of the truth of the new revealings ;—doubtless because these are more readily understood by the uninitiated than the seer's own works, but invariably leading to the study of the writings they aim to elucidate.

The following are extracts from a portion (only a fraction, however) of the letters here referred to ; and nearly all of them are from ministers. But none of this testimony is from persons who are, or have ever been, identified with the organized New Church. These ministers are all familiar with the Old Theologies, most of them having studied and preached them for years ; and they know, therefore, from their own personal experience, the relative worth and helpfulness of the Old and the New Theology. They know, too, with what gladness the best of their people receive the new teachings, and how perceptibly they grow, under their enlightening and quickening influence, in all the Christian graces ; and nothing but the prevailing and intense but blind prejudice

which is known to exist against the writings of Swedenborg, prevents them from telling their people through what channel they have received the higher or more interior truths of the Word. Their testimony, therefore, is all the stronger for the fact that it comes not from professed New-Churchmen, and is therefore not open to the suspicion of being prompted by a sectarian spirit, or a desire to enlarge and strengthen a particular denomination. In all these ministers the love of truth, and of the good to which truth leads, has overcome and cast out the spirit of sect.

These extracts have been taken indiscriminately from our files of letters received during the last nine years, and no other order in their arrangement has been observed but that of the annual date of the successive groups. Some of the more recent ones speak of the help derived from *THE NEW CHRISTIANITY*, which is really testimony to the truth and value of Swedenborg's teachings. For, standing at the head of this paper, is the following:—

#### STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

1. *THE NEW CHRISTIANITY* recognizes the Two Great Commandments (Matt. xxii : 37-40) as embracing the essentials of true religion and of Christian fellowship.

2. It recognizes the propriety and use of organized churches (with their divine ordinances), and seeks to promote the spiritual growth of all.



3. It holds that pure or absolute religious truth is not attainable by finite minds, and that perfect agreement, therefore, in religious doctrine is not to be insisted upon; charity, or righteousness of life, being the end of all doctrine.

4. It accepts Emanuel Swedenborg as a divinely illumined expounder of the Word, or Sacred Scriptures, and aims to be a true exponent of the principles through him revealed.

The names and places of residence of the writers from whose letters these extracts are taken are omitted, for reasons which every one will understand and appreciate. A very few of them—perhaps three or four—are from laymen, but a full hundred are from ministers; and the single one from a well-known New-Churchman, was merely to tell of letters he had received from ministers commending Madeley's "Science of Correspondences Elucidated," and thanking the Connecticut New-Church Association for the gift which they highly prized.

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*EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1882.*

*From a "United Brethren" Preacher.*

"I am a preacher in the Church of the 'United Brethren,' and have been transferred to the —— Conference. I first became acquainted with the New-Church doctrines nearly a year ago, and from the first they struck me with their rationality and catholicity, and the purity of life enjoined from love to the Lord and the neighbor; and now I am heartily a receiver of these heavenly doctrines, and desire to live for the Lord, and to

perform uses for the advancement of his kingdom in the hearts of the children of men.

"I want the 'Swedenborg Library' and your own works as advertised in 'The Man and his Mission.' . . . I feel that there is a good field here for the spread and reception of the N. C. doctrines, and I am desirous to be of use in this direction. If you or some one else will furnish the books, I will use them as a circulating library among those interested.

"Thanks for your kindness in sending me 'The Man and his Mission,' also the 'Contents of the Swedenborg Library.' From the latter I infer that your books are more than helpful to those knowing how to use them. I shall take great pleasure in commending them to our town library, and also to that of the city of ———, two miles distant."

*From an Episcopal Minister.*

"I have now finished reading your letters on the 'Divine Trinity' and cannot withstand the impulse of expressing to you my great delight with the work. It certainly is a clear, forcible, and eminently rational explanation of that doctrine, and as an *explanation* of Swedenborg's views, incomparably superior to his own expression of them, so far as my acquaintance with his writings goes. And I will go further: as explained by you, the difficulties which it has to encounter in the minds of serious persons who feel that they can never rest satisfied with any view which does not fully meet all the demands of reason and the Scriptures, are immeasurably less than those by which the popular doctrine is embarrassed. Of this I feel fully convinced."

*From another Episcopal Minister.*

"I regard him [Swedenborg] as a great man, a great thinker, one of those minds that impress themselves deeply and abid-

ingly upon the race. I have learned and continually do learn much from him that I value among the richest treasures of my theological studies. And I feel that, whatever may be our explanation of the origin or mode of acquirement of his thoughts, they deserve the consideration of all who desire to have converse with one of the master thinkers of the modern church."

*From a Presbyterian Minister who subscribed for the 'Swedenborg Library' and now accepts the New Doctrines.*

" . . . The one essential of the church is, to fear God and keep his commandments. The Lord Jesus taught this. . . . Swedenborg teaches this. The essential thing of the New Church is, that 'the Lord Jesus Christ is the God of heaven and earth, and religion consists in keeping his commandments.' This is all the creed any church needs, or has any right to have as a condition of membership. The church may formulate at length its doctrines for the sake of instruction, but it has no right to impose anything by authority, or on penalty of exclusion from its communion, on any man who acknowledges and obeys the Lord. Christians should call no man master on earth, because they have one, only one, Master, the Lord himself; and they are all brethren. . . .

"It is an important inquiry whether a new organization is not demanded—an organization which will plant itself squarely on this rock: That the one essential thing of religion is, to acknowledge the Lord and keep his commandments; which will teach its members to look to the Lord alone, and call no man or body of men, Master; which will teach them to allow their brethren the same freedom, and to bear with them in their ignorance or errors; which will teach its members to seek for the good and true, and not be afraid of Swedenborg or any other man who has something to say; to listen to all, but to

*follow* the Lord alone. This church should exemplify as well as teach the doctrine of charity. It occurs to me as possible that such an organization might perform a great use, . . . and might leaven all other churches with the truths and principles of the New Age."

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EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1883.

*From a Baptist Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT :—Many thanks for your excellent and timely work on 'The Doctrines of the New Church. It is a deeply interesting volume, and cannot fail to perform an important use in the Lord's kingdom. I think it is just the book needed for colleges and seminaries. Inclosed find \$5 to help it along; and if you need another \$5, just say so, and it will be forthcoming. God bless you in your great and good work. My heart is with you always."

*From an Episcopal Minister.*

"Though loaded down with a press of duties of all sorts which had accumulated during a three weeks' absence, I have found time to read your work, and to read it very carefully. . . . There is nothing in the book which any Christian need be afraid of, and much that is calculated to remove doubts and difficulties, and to help humble and earnest inquirers on their heavenward way. . . . I do not know but this little work actually surpasses in value as an introduction to Swedenborg, all your previous writings. For this purpose it is even better than 'Barrett's Lectures on the New Dispensation,' valuable as that work is. . . .

"This much is certain to me : Swedenborg was a great philo-

sophical and theological thinker, and indeed so *exceptionally* great, that his writings have certainly revolutionized theological thought; and with him the Church unquestionably entered upon a new Epoch—though his influence is only just *beginning* to be felt; and that Epoch is therefore yet in its early dawn.”

*From another Baptist Minister.*

“Will you please send a copy of the ‘Science of Correspondences elucidated’ to Rev. ———, D.D., of ———, with my name on the wrapper or in the book, and send bill to me. I have been reading the work somewhat, and think it admirable. I wish I had money to send a copy to every minister in the land.”

*From a Congregational Minister.*

“I have been a constant reader of N. C. works for five years. I have a set of the Arcana and all the other principal works of Swedenborg, with many collateral works. I have secured to our city library a set of the A. C. and ten others of Swedenborg’s books. Considerable interest is being created through their circulation.

“I, too, can testify to the leaven-like influence permeating all classes of society through the instrumentality of New-Church teaching. I proclaim it without ‘let or hindrance.’ Many have avowed their preference for it over the old views. Of course there are some *constitutionally* opposed to receiving anything new. But they are *not* the most intelligent persons—far from it.”

*From another Congregational Minister.*

“Of late I have been reading Dr. Holcombe’s ‘Lost Truths of Christianity,’ and ‘Aphorisms of the New Life.’ They are a revelation to me, and just what I need. How good the Lord

is to have things for us just as we need them. I would like very much to own 'The Swedenborg Library' in 12 vols., which I find advertised in 'Aphorisms.' But I must wait till the Lord provides." [And this correspondent had not to wait long.—B.]

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"Enclosed find \$1.00, price of four numbers of New-Church Popular Series. You have surely gotten *on the right track* in *this* way of publishing N. C. literature. I hope the time will come when such books will be published *monthly* to regular subscribers. I would like to have many such works in my library. To my mind, Barrett's 'Swedenborg Library' is the *greatest success* ever accomplished in the popularizing of N. C. truth, and these extra volumes are but the continuation of the same good work. Keep on."

*From an Evangelical German Pastor.*

"Though entirely unknown to you, I am a minister and co-worker in the Lord's vineyard, and for many years past in connection with an Evangelical German Church. In principle I am a New Churchman, and am endeavoring to teach the heavenly doctrines to the people of my charge. A few months ago a Tract came to hand entitled 'A Brief Exposition of the Doctrines of the New Church,' of which you are the honored author. This Tract pleased me so well, that I at once resolved to make a translation of it into the German language, and have it published for general distribution among our large German population. With the aid of some friends the matter has been accomplished, and the nicely printed Tract is already in the hands of many Germans, and will no doubt fulfil its useful mission."

*From a Presbyterian Elder.*

"I have been a reader of New-Church doctrines for some years, and my views now accord with Brother ——'s, although I am still in connection with the Presbyterian Church (Elder). I take great pleasure in the dissemination of these truths. Within the last two or three years I have purchased not less than \$100 worth of books and tracts pertaining to the doctrines of the New Church; and the reading of these has not been without its influence."

*From an Episcopal Minister.*

"Having long cherished a desire to know something of Swedenborg and his writings, I procured a copy of his A. R., H. H., and T. C. R. ["Apocalypse Revealed," "Heaven and Hell," and "True Christian Religion"] which three works I have not only read, but carefully studied—and am getting more hungry and thirsty for spiritual food. . . . Will you favor me with full information regarding your 'Swedenborg Library,' which, if possible, I would like to procure? And let me know the lowest price, for I have not much of this world's goods—the church or society I am connected with (Prot. Episcopal) being small and very poor."

[The S. Library was soon sent him at a greatly reduced price.—B.] And not long after, the same gentleman writes again:—

"I have already succeeded in winning *six* persons, who, according to my judgment of their lives and conversation, truly accept and believe the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem."

And six weeks later he writes (ordering a few more volumes of our works), and says:—

"Your 'Swedenborg Library' is excellent; and it makes me

supremely happy to have the few [of my people] who are interested in the doctrines of the New Church, come to borrow and read them : . . . and to answer their many and almost innumerable questions, and to explain these doctrines to them as they gather round about me in private."

"And a few weeks later he writes again :—

"I am pleased to say that the books, from present appearances, will be read by many more than I at first expected. I find *two more* of my little congregation prepared to receive these new revelations. . . . I accept your suggestions [as to the best course to be pursued in a private class]. Vol. VIII of the 'Swedenborg Library,' treating of the Sacred Scriptures, is, without doubt, the best book to begin with, and I thank you for your advice. I seem to profit a great deal by your suggestions, and am glad you have not withheld them. I shall speak to those who are ready to embrace the opportunity of studying E. S. in private, and, if possible, have them purchase a copy of the book."

*From Another Episcopal Minister.*

"Enclosed please find the postage for the package you so kindly sent me about a week since. I had hoped to be able to read both books in a day or two, therefore to be able to thank you more intelligently for them. But in this I have been disappointed. . . . I have lately read Swedenborg's 'Doctrine of the N. J. respecting the Sacred Scripture;' and immediately afterwards, by way of impressing the salient points of that work more deeply upon my memory, Vol. VII. of the 'Swedenborg Library,' down to the 'Key.' I hope to read that, also, in a day or two. When read, I know I shall long for something more of the kind. . . . I met Rev. Mr. ——— [of the 'Evangelical' school]. I had a long talk with him. He



is a full receiver of the N. C. doctrines, but stands on your platform with regard to the nature and whereabouts of the New Church."

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*EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1884.*

*From a Universalist Minister.*

"I received a little pamphlet on the 'Deterioration of the Puritan Stock' a little while ago, and I noticed on one of the covers the advertisement of your work entitled 'The Science of Correspondences Elucidated,'—price \$1.25 to ministers. Now I would like very much to have that work, with the pamphlets you send gratis; but I am not able to buy it. I have only \$400 a year, and a family to support. And yet I do hunger after some such work as you advertise. If you feel able to send me a copy, and feel that the good it might accomplish will repay you for the cost, I would receive it with a thankful heart.

"———, *Pastor Universalist Church.*"

A copy of the Science of Correspondences was immediately mailed to this brother, and not long after he wrote:—

"The book came to hand, for which please accept my hearty thanks. I have already selected from it the substance of two sermons and one lecture. So far as I have read, it is much better than I expected to find it.

"Yours fraternally, ———."

*From a Baptist Minister.*

"DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:—About a year ago, when I was pastor of the Baptist Church at ———, I received a pamphlet from Dr. John Ellis, called 'Deterioration of the Puritan Stock.' I read it with profit. It created an appetite

for more of such literature. I wished to learn and practice more love to God, and more charity for my neighbor. I therefore provided myself with one of your works which I saw mentioned in Dr. Ellis's pamphlet. I got 'The Doctrines of the New Church Briefly Explained.' [No. 5 of *New-Church Popular Series*.] From it I have received great light. I wish to be *led* still further into the light. Will you take my hand? Please let me know of some good periodical that will keep me 'posted' in regard to the general work of 'The New Church.' I intend soon to provide myself with Swedenborg's complete works, and your works also. . . . I have been a minister of the Gospel nearly twelve years, with a *clean* record, etc. I am fully resolved to go wherever the truth leads. Hoping to hear from you, I remain

"Yours in love to God, and charity to

"the neighbor ————,

"Pastor Baptist Church, ————."

*From a Minister in North Carolina.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—The tract, with receipt for \$5.80 [for books], came to hand yesterday. It is now about three years since I began to look into *Swedenborgianism* (so called) for something more than the dreams of a mystic; and I am happy to say that I have found an inexhaustible mine of heavenly treasures."

*From a Minister of the Disciples' Church.*

"I have been a hearty receiver of the New-Church Doctrines now for seven or eight years. I am a regular minister in the Old Church, among the people calling themselves Christians or Disciples, popularly known as Campbellites. My preaching is more popular and more effective upon the common mind than

it was before I read New-Church literature. But the preachers think me astray, especially those who know whither I am 'drifting,' as one of them expressed it.

"Sometimes and in some places I have openly acknowledged my indebtedness to the New Church; but at other times and places I have not. And these experiments have convinced me thoroughly that the time has not yet come for me openly to advocate the New-Church doctrine, unless I leave my present relations and join the New Church. Whether to do that or not has been a question of serious thought. . . . I am now getting along nicely with my new charge, on which I entered the first of the year (1884). I am also getting along nicely with the preachers of the other denominations, who are progressive men. . . .

"Now, if you can give me any suggestion, I would be glad. As a receiver I have been all alone. Sometimes in my isolation I feel really hungry for sympathy and advice. If you have the time, I will be glad to receive a letter from you."

I promptly replied to this brother's letter, sending him some New-Church books, and advising him, as I often have advised other ministers similarly situated, to pursue a prudent, gentle course; to preach the truth affirmatively as he understands it, disturbing no one by running a tilt against the old dogmas; to try and win his people by the exhibition of a higher, holier, and more devoted life; and thus endeavor to educate them gradually *out* of the Old *into* the New, and lead them in the heavenly way. And about three

months thereafter another letter came from him, from which the following is an extract:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER:—After reading your ‘Apocalyptic New Jerusalem,’ and the other large work, I am confirmed in the view which I imbibed from my reading of the T. C. R., the first of Swedenborg’s works that I ever read. I drew the conclusion from my first reading of that work that, if Swedenborg be taken as an authority, there must be many genuine members of the New Church now in the different divisions of the Old Church. When I carefully read his graphic description of what characters would be members of the New Church, I thought I could point out just such characters in my own communion. It was his doctrine of charity as set forth in the T. C. R. that first began to win me; and if that bait had not been on the great fisherman’s hook, I, for one, should never have snapped at it. But I felt my heart growing warmer as I read that lovely doctrine. Conscience seemed to grow stronger and wiser, and my liberality began to expand.

“It was matter of hearty rejoicing to me that I could now begin to see how *perfect fidelity to truth* was entirely compatible with *the broadest charity*. While I was confirmed in my former view that I should preach nothing but the truth, yet I saw, as I never clearly saw before, that truth should always be ‘*spoken in love*,’ and should be used only to save and never to condemn. In those early days of my reception of N. C. doctrines I supposed that if ever I should meet with New-Church people I would find them meek and gentle, and ready to reach out the hand to encourage me. I did not then see that the Lord was keeping me away from N. C. people to prevent me

from being frozen out. I can now see that my very isolation was a blessing and my safety. The Lord leads the blind in a way which they know not. . . .

"As to my personal attitude towards the New Church [organization], I think I can be a better as well as a more useful man by maintaining my present ecclesiastical relations. . . . And the Lord being my helper, I shall be more cautious than ever not to forfeit my standing among my own brethren. . . . I have read Swedenborg to no purpose if it be not true that his writings breathe the sweetest charity, the gentlest forbearance, and the tenderest toleration. And if any one should ever convince me that I am mistaken, and that he and his doctrines breathe the spirit of bigotry and intolerance, then I shall make a bonfire of all my New Church literature.

"But I have the presumption (if such it be) to interpret Swedenborg for myself, and I long to drink more and more of the sweet and gentle spirit which he always infuses into my soul. My daily prayer to the Lord is, that I may become more kind, long-suffering, and conciliatory towards all who differ from me in doctrine and opinion. And if the spirit of Christ is contrary to this, then I don't want to be a Christian. If the dear Lord can make me a vessel fit for his use in leading my brethren slowly and quietly into the better doctrine and higher life, my highest ambition will be realized. And I shall be more cautious than ever not to over-drive the flock for a single day, lest they should all die, as Jacob said to Esau.

"Hoping you will some time write me at your leisure, I remain, kindly and lovingly,

"Yours in the Lord,

"———."

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"I regard your recent work on 'What are the Doctrines of the New Church?' as the best work of the kind I have ever read for general use. I read it on a sick-bed, when death stood before me face to face, and I can testify to its great worth in the light of eternity. It is simply invaluable.

"While I have not yet had time to read your 'Footprints,' I have nevertheless turned over nearly all of its pages, and have in a general way followed you in your argument. I am much pleased with the work, and think it will serve an important use. We need at times to consider these footprints of progress. Your work reminds me of the pious Arab who, on being asked how he knew there was a God, replied, 'How do I know that a camel passed my tent last night? Do I not see his footprints before me?' And so, if any person shall ask me again—as they have often done before—for evidences of a New Age, I shall be enabled with satisfaction to point them to 'Footprints of the New Age: by B. F. Barrett.' These footprints are so clearly shown that none but the wilfully blind can help seeing them. I wish to subscribe annually to your Society [Association], for I am in full sympathy with its aims and hopes."

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*EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1885.*

*From a Presbyterian Minister.*

"*Very much* that you teach in this book [*Heaven Revealed*] I regard as God's own precious truth, which must be of immense spiritual help to every one who reads it with an unprejudiced mind. . . . Anything so suggestive of noble spiritual ideals as this book is should be gratefully welcomed by every one who is working for humanity's uplifting and regeneration."

*From a Baptist Minister.*

"I have examined your excellent work entitled *Heaven Revealed*, with the deepest interest and with great delight. As a popular presentation of Swedenborg's disclosures about heaven, I know of no work equal to it. Its clearness and freshness are both charming and convincing. The chapter alone on 'The Origin of Angels,' is worth the price of the whole book. This opinion is also shared by an intelligent member of my congregation who has for some time been deeply interested in the pneumatology of Swedenborg. His verdict is that '*Heaven Revealed* is simply grand'—the best he has yet read. I predict for your book a very large circulation and a very wide sphere of permanent usefulness."

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"Your kind favor of October 19th is before me. Accept my heartfelt thanks for your kind words, wise counsel, and the books. The advice you give comes very timely, for I was at a loss to know just what course to take, but had felt impressed that the course you suggest would be the wise one to follow. . . . My discourses, which are all treated from the New-Church standpoint, are doing much in this community to open the eyes of the orthodox people not only in my own church, but in the other churches. The present situation is very promising. A large percentage of my church members are pleased with my teaching, and stand firmly by me. Few (until recently) have known that the doctrines [they were listening to] were New Church. Most of them know it now."

*From the same (a few weeks later).*

"The First Baptist Church of —, of which I am pastor, at its regular business meeting, held Nov. 2d, by more than a four-fifths' vote indorsed my recent series of discourses as the truth

of God ; and, to emphasize that indorsement, the Trustees were empowered to secure my services as pastor for the term of *two years*. . . . They seemed to think if what I had been giving them was Swedenborg's doctrine, they would like more of it."

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"I resigned my charge at —, with the best wishes not only of the church, but of the community generally ; took good credentials, etc., and am laboring acceptably as pastor of the Baptist church here. They wish me to accept their unanimous call and settle permanently as their pastor for coming years. I must take time to consider. This church is more willing to accept progressive thought than the one I lately resigned.

"I have subscribed for the two periodicals you recommended, viz., the *N. J. Magazine* and the *N. C. Messenger*. I am continually getting more light, and am trying to *walk in the light*. I wish to be humble, but believe I am developing intellectually and spiritually.

"I thank you kindly for the books you sent me, and have read them carefully and prayerfully. . . . I am heartily tired of party spirit, man-made creeds, old sectarian ruts, and all narrowness. We Baptists are *too narrow*. . . . I thank you more than I can now tell you for your kind letter, which has been the means of leading me into greater light and liberty."

*From the same (two weeks later).*

"DEAR BROTHER :—Your kind reply is received. Accept my thanks. I see wisdom in your suggestions, and will do as you advise—'remain where I am, and lead the people into greater light.' I never saw a people more willing to be led—providing I do not mention the name of E. S. . . . The good Lord is giving me great success here, for which I am thankful. . . .



Thanks for the little books. May God bless you for the kindness you have shown in your letters. I remain

“Your Brother always,

“— —.”

*From another Baptist Minister.*

“Thanks for yours of the 6th inst. I have glanced through ‘Holcombe's Letters’ and ‘The Garden of Eden,’ and prize them very highly. Have more carefully gone over ‘The Apocalyptic New Jerusalem,’ which has so fully confirmed me in views previously entertained as to remove the remains of anxiety and doubt.

“I closed a six years' pastorate of the Baptist church of — one year ago. Have been interested in New-Church doctrines about two years, and preach them at the school-house and fire-side, where most of my present teaching is done. They are somewhat variously received; but I am encouraged by the fact that a class of people is being reached who have hitherto held themselves aloof as far as possible from all religious influence; and I hope at no distant day we shall be able to organize a New-Church society here. Sometimes I feel a little lonely in my work; but when I remember that the Lord (in his second advent) is here in power and glory, the feeling passes away, and my heart is filled with peace, joy and hope.

“I thank you most sincerely for your kind letter, so full of sympathy, encouragement and instruction—as also for the books, all of which are highly prized.”

*From an Episcopal Minister.*

“I am a Presbyterian of the Prot. Epis. Church, of thirty years. I have been reading N. C. writings for five years. The people know that I read them. I teach in a plain and positive way, in

a quiet manner, and from the *Bible*. Having been here but a few months, it would not do to tell the people I am teaching the doctrines of E. S. But I can teach the truth, and enforce it from the Word, and they will readily accept it. I do not yet find any one uneasy as to my teachings, but all seem impressed by the work I do on the Lord's day.

"I take the N. C. M., and have done so for three or four years. Have distributed a large number of tracts, and secured the 'Gift Books' for nearly forty clergymen and laymen. Have bought and distributed with profit some of your works. I aim to do the work so as to have it tell. Next week I shall, if possible, have the 'Gift Books' sent to a clergyman of the Christian denomination [Disciples]. He has promised to take them and *read* them. I have your 'Library' of 12 volumes. My wife has read them, and is a partial receiver."

*From another Episcopal Minister.*

"I have studied Swedenborg enough to see that his views on fundamental doctrines are not only intensely rational, but in strictest accordance with the teaching of Holy Scripture. . . His theology is not 'Petrine' nor 'Pauline,' but it *is* 'Johannean.' . . .

"Last evening I was going over the principal contents of your book [*Heaven Revealed*] with two ladies, one of them a staunch Presbyterian, who remarked: 'The views are so beautiful, so attractive, so entirely in accordance with what our God-given instincts lead us to perceive, that I desire to hear more about them. I have never heard any such views advanced in regard to heaven before, in all my life. They are novel, but they strike me as *true*.'"

*From the same (a few weeks later).*

"*The New View of Hell* reached me by due course of mail,

and I have just finished reading it. Apart from one single statement on p. 170—a statement, however, in no wise affecting the general argument—there is not a word in the book to which I can take the slightest exception. . . .

"In conclusion permit me to say, that I esteem it a very great privilege to have been permitted to read this book in connection with your new work, *Heaven Revealed*. The two should be read together. Their practical tendency seems to me to be good, and only good. How any one can rise from the perusal of these books without the determination, by the grace of God, to 'lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before him, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith,' is to me a mystery. And I believe few will."

*From a Congregational D. D.*

"Although not a disciple of Swedenborg, I am not averse to recognizing the great things effected by him in the domain of religious thought. In what your book [*Heaven Revealed*] says concerning 'the essential nature of heaven,' 'the sure way to heaven,' 'environment in heaven,' 'homes,' 'children,' 'work' and 'progress in heaven,' I find much that is sensible and helpful, and very little to dissent from or to qualify. . . . I cannot doubt that the practical influence of the book, as a whole, will be for good. Indeed, from what I have been able to read of it, I am disposed to read more, and to thank you for the work."

*From a Methodist Minister.*

"I have been studying Swedenborg quite thoroughly, and have entered into experiences in the direction of his teaching—think I am growing in the right direction. I have reached a foundation of faith and philosophy which to me seems solid,

and satisfies both reason and heart. . . . I believe he [E. S.] was a seer of the highest order, and that his is the only true spiritual philosophy and the true interpretation of the Word. And the Christian thought and theology of this age have got to come to it. The growing thought of the churches is in this direction, but the great mass of the preachers are still going round in the narrow circles of the old dogmatism. . . .

"There is not a shred of the Old Theology left in me. The end of the world has come to me. The old Dispensation is consummated. The Lord comes now. The New Age has begun—the New Jerusalem descends. My soul is turned to the East, and rejoices in its morning. The night is past, though the twilight still lingers. Spiritual realities are yet seen but dimly-shadowed in the mists of the morning. But the spiritual Sun is rising on this bewildered world.

"I still belong to the M. E. Church, though I really believe none of its theology. I feel it is best to remain with them for the present. The time for the old hulls to drop off has not come yet, and I don't think it best to try to *pull* them off. And after all there is a better chance to work within than without. I still preach occasionally, sometimes in the Methodist and sometimes in the Congregational church; and sometimes I go outside wherever there is an opening. Of course, I do not preach the old theology which I do not believe."

*From another Methodist Minister.*

"Enclosed find \$1.00, for which please send me Dr. Holcombe's 'Letters on Spiritual Subjects.' . . . I am satisfied with and fully embrace the doctrines of the New Church on the Trinity, the Atonement, the Resurrection and the Life. I am a member of the ——— Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have lived and labored beyond my threescore and ten

years, and regret that I did not make an earlier acquaintance with the writings of (what I believe him to have been) one of the world's greatest men. I am poor, and take the dollar from the uses of the natural man, with the desire and hope of finding food for the spiritual man in Dr. H.'s book."

*From the same (of later date).*

"I have read your *Heaven Revealed* (and re-read some portions of it) with intense satisfaction—yes, I can truly say, with delight. I have loaned it to a neighbor, who is also delighted with it. As a basis for the formation of Christian life and character, the book is inestimable. What a pity it could not find its way into every family in our land."

*From another Methodist Minister—a D. D.*

"I received your excellent book entitled *Heaven Revealed*. Was much interested in it and much pleased to get it. . . . While the thoughts contained in the book are not new to me—for I have been a reader of Swedenborg's works for over thirty years—yet I found pleasure in reading again sentiments and views of the heavenly state, which have always afforded me much comfort. The views of Swedenborg on the subject of the heavenly state are so rational, so completely in harmony with the laws of our spiritual being, and, above all, so consonant with the Divine Word, that I can hardly conceive it possible they should not be correct. . . .

"I think your book is calculated to do much good, by giving its readers more exalted and rational views of the heavenly state than those ordinarily entertained. I trust it may have an extensive sale, and that its tendency may be to wean many from that evil and selfish kind of life which characterizes so largely even professedly religious people.

"Yours in our Divine Lord,

"— — —."

*From still another.*

"My course of reading for a year or two past has been in the line of Butler's 'Analogy,' Hall's 'Problem of Human Life,' 'Natural Law in the Spiritual World,' 'The Unseen Universe,' together with works on Idealism as published by the so-called Christian Scientists.

"In pursuance of this vein of thought, I have just completed Vol. XII. of 'The Swedenborg Library' and have been finding it wonderfully helpful. My whole soul goes out for an entire new spiritual life—for a better understanding of truth, and a life of love. I want all the volumes of the Swedenborg Library. . . . What can you do to help me towards getting them?"

The Swedenborg Library was immediately offered this brother at a greatly reduced price; and shortly after the whole set was ordered by him, and within a few months thereafter he sent for several other books.

*From a Minister of the Disciples' Church.*

"What a pity that the slavery of ignorance renders it necessary to doubt the ability of its subjects to bear light! From the hasty glances which I have so far found time to give your book, I have been much edified and assisted in my attempts to understand more of the Real World. An impartial jury ought to decide that your book is powerfully suggestive; and its effect ought to be to send its readers back to the Bible to reëxamine all bases of faith. Many will read it with profit—I among them."

*From another Minister of this denomination.*

"Your book reached me at a busy time, and I have not examined it as I desired to. As far as I have gone, it has

helped me to a better understanding of the positions discussed. In some respects I like Swedenborg. In many things I do not comprehend him or I can't agree with him. Your expositions have made me see more clearly, and I admire your method."

*From a Unitarian Minister.*

"I have read your book [*Heaven Revealed*] with interest and profit. I have been a reader, and to some extent a 'receiver,' of the Swedish seer ever since I entered the ministry . . . . Your works from time to time I have also read with interest. This last work of yours is well fitted, I think, to introduce the great Swede to those unacquainted with him, and to show them the *rational* basis on which his teachings and visions rest. . . . Slowly, but surely, I think, the world is coming to the *philosophy* of the spiritual world found in the New-Church teachings. But it is not on the authority of Swedenborg the philosophy is received, but on the authority of reason—the voice of God in the soul.

"As to the practical influence of your book, I think it must be good. For while I cannot accept all its teaching, it does make the spiritual world seem, *as it is*, something real, and gives an idea of Heaven and Hell to which, in the main, our common sense responds. I thank you for the book."

*From a Professor in a California University.*

"On my return from a Geological camp I found your book [*Heaven Revealed*] awaiting me: and have been reading it, and need not say how much I am pleased.

"Let me assure you, dear sir, that I most deeply sympathize with the views, doctrines, or revelations—call them what you like—of Swedenborg. It seems to me he has already impregnated all modern literature and revolutionized all modern

religious thought, although few seem to know their indebtedness to him. If I cannot wholly, unreservedly, and heartily accept the reality of his communication with spirits, it is only because long dealing with scientific methods makes it difficult to do so. I find precisely the same difficulty, neither more nor less, with the supernatural in the Bible. . . .

"I cannot for a moment doubt the powerful tendency for good of all Swedenborg's works, and therefore, also, of your admirable vindication of them."

*From a Deacon in a Baptist Church.*

"I completed your book, *The New View of Hell*, a day or two ago, and must say it has given me a great deal of new light. I consider it, in connection with *Heaven Revealed*, which was loaned me by Brother ———, and which I read a few weeks since, two volumes that should be in every library, and frequently read. . . .

"The views of the New Church are in most respects, as far as I am able to judge, strictly in accordance with the teachings of the Sacred Word. Although I have been cautioned about reading these works, yet I cannot see wherein they are dangerous. I am free to acknowledge that they have led me very close to the blessed Master, and am very thankful that they have been put within my reach. I hope the Saviour will put it into your heart to write many more such useful works, and that you may spread them broadcast over this land, that the eyes of those in darkness may be opened."

*From another Congregational Minister.*

"They [objections to Swedenborg on certain points] cannot blind my eyes, however, to the immense wealth of thought and truth contained in his system. . . The practical bearing of this book [*Heaven Revealed*] is excellent, many of its lessons in-



valuable. Such teaching could not fail, I think, to inspire nobler ideals of living here, and to make earth better as well as Heaven surer. In all these respects we owe you a large debt for interpreting to us, and applying to this time, the teachings of Swedenborg."

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*EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1886.*

*From a Congregational Minister in Australia.*

This was an interesting letter of ten pages, stating some of the writer's difficulties, and concluding with the following :—

. . . "Long as my letter is, I am aware that my difficulties have been stated very imperfectly and disjointedly; but you, having passed through much the same, will interpret them better than I could express them even in a much longer epistle. I can say honestly, though, notwithstanding the difficulties I find in accepting or understanding Swedenborg and the New-Church collateral writings, 'the only really spiritual pabulum I get comes from that quarter.' I want to get a thorough grasp of your positions, as I feel and have felt for a long time that the Old Church, with its gross literalism, is quite unable to grapple with the questions which are constantly pressing upon us. Our ground, I am convinced, notwithstanding the reiterated assertions of our leading lights to the contrary, is completely honeycombed by the advances of the scientific spirit. . . .

"My apology for thus writing you is the conviction I have that you will gladly render me any light or assistance in your power. I may state that I am a Congregational minister.

"With gratitude for light received from your books ['The Divine Trinity,' 'Future Life,' 'New Dispensation' and 'New

View of Hell'] mentioned at the beginning of my letter, and best wishes for your continued usefulness, I am

"Yours sincerely, ————."

*From a Unitarian Minister in New England.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—On my return from a short vacation, I find your 'True Catholicism,' 'The New Age,' and 'The Bible? or the Creed?' which you have kindly sent me. Like a bee among the choicest flowers, I have been sipping the sweets, not of theology but of pure and undefiled religion. I am thankful to God that you are instrumental in in-bringing so much sweetness and light. The old systems and *schemes* are passing away; the dross is being removed that the pure gold of truth and righteousness may remain—and abide forever. More and more we are getting to the uplands of Galilee; and, sitting reverently at the feet of our Saviour, Christ, we are finding that His holy religion is *Light, Life and Spirit*, just as He said when He tabernacled among the sons of men.

"I rejoice that you are doing so much to modify the old-time theologies, and in place of negations to put forth such a simple faith as to win the love and esteem of all who are seeking to help humanity onward toward the goal of the heavenly life.

"Rest assured that I shall diligently study your books—'read, mark, and inwardly digest;' and, God helping me, I shall bring forth from my treasury 'things new and old.'

"Fraternally yours, ————."

*From a Baptist Minister in Georgia.*

"BROTHER BARRETT:—I have received and read your tract, 'The Bible? or the Creed?' and you can hardly imagine how much I relished its contents. You have hit my case exactly. I have been a reader and firm believer of the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem for ten or twelve years, and have

been in the Gospel ministry for the last forty years. And I am ready and willing to say that I have gained more light on the Scriptures from the New-Church writings than from all other commentators put together. . . .

"But I have injured my usefulness to some extent by openly and publicly assailing from the pulpit the old and still existing creeds, . . . so that, occasionally, on visiting some of the missionary churches, I find the doors and pulpits closed against me; when, if I had taken the course counseled in your tract, I should not have met with such opposition."

*From a Distinguished Minister in the West.*

"DEAR SIR:—By suggestion on the cover of 'Progressive Thought,' etc., . . . I write you for information about books on the 'New Christianity.' Although a Baptist Minister and Pastor of the 'Orthodox type,' I am yet an honest *inquirer after truth*. A student and teacher . . . for long years of the languages of Italy and Greece and their literatures, as well as the Bible, I am not restful in much that goes for inspired truth.

"I have already ordered Dr. John Ellis' 'Skepticism and Div. Revelation,' Swedenborg's 'True Christian Religion,' 'Apoc. Revealed,' and 'Heaven and Hell.' Send me what book you think I'll need additional. I have stumbled for a long time on the 'Cadaver Resurrection.' If you have any book determinative on this, please send it and the price. . . . If you send me one or two best works on the trend of the New Christianity, with price to ministers, I will enclose you the amount by return mail.

"I have the courage of this conviction, that the progress of Christian thought is now distanced by that of true science, which is also one form of God's revelation to men. . . .

"Yours for the Truth, \_\_\_\_\_."

*From a Minister in Indiana.*

"DEAR BROTHER:—A few days ago I received a copy of 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects,' which I read with attention and much interest—and must read again. So grand are its thoughts—to me new thoughts—that I hunger now for more. I am laboring on small pay, but I desire to give these great subjects more thought, and to give to others as you say in your Appendix, p. 110. Please send me the catalogue of works published by your Association—find stamps enclosed.

"Rev. ——— ———."

*From a Methodist Minister in Texas.*

"DEAR BROTHER:—I bought the 'Science of Correspondences' some time since, and am reading it as I have time. I am pleased with and interested in it, and, am not ashamed to say, instructed and benefited by it. I think I should like to read the 'Swedenborg Library.' Please tell me the price of it to ministers.

"I have just concluded my twelfth year in the Texas Conference. I never received over \$400 a year—generally less. I have a wife and four children; so you see that money cannot reasonably be very flush with me. But our lives must be spent in doing good, not in accumulating earthly treasures.

"Yours in Christian Brotherhood, ——— ———."

"The Swedenborg Library" was offered this brother at a greatly reduced price; and soon after he remitted \$3.50, and ordered the set sent him. A new edition, bound in six volumes instead of twelve is now (1891) offered to ministers at \$2.50, post-paid.

*From a Baptist Minister in Kansas.*

"MY CHRISTIAN BROTHER:—I have been much pleased and instructed in reading 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects,' lately sent me by some unknown friend. I have for several years felt a desire to become acquainted with Swedenborg's New Theology; but my limited income in my loved occupation (Pastor of the Baptist Church in —) has always shaken its head, *No*.

"Now, please inform me how I can be favored in reading or having Swedenborg's works to read, and at what cost. Also please send catalogue of publications by 'The Swedenborg Publishing Association' to one who desires to know our blessed Master's will and revelation better, and thereby be better equipped for his work—be enabled to preach more truth and with greater clearness.

"Yours in Christian service, — —."

*From a Minister in Michigan.*

"DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—A book entitled 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects' came to me a few days ago; and I have read every word of it with intense interest, and it has awakened in me a desire to know more about the 'New Christianity.' I want the 'Swedenborg Library' (12 vols.), but cannot send for it just now, as I am getting ready to go forth as a missionary in our home mission work—a good time to begin with the higher views."

*From a Teacher in Missouri.*

"DEAR BROTHER:—I have read and re-read (partly) 'Progressive Thought.' It is the *best* to me of anything I have yet seen. I am more and more convinced that the revolution of

theology and ecclesiasticism is the brightening of the Glorious Morn.

"O, how my bewildered mind is being calmed by these peaceful breezes! . . . I want your teachings to prove true, and I'm almost *sure* they will. God speed the time when 'all His people shall be one.'

"Please send me 'The Science of Correspondences' by Madeley, 'Aphorisms of the New Life,' and 'Helps to Spiritual Growth' by Holcombe, 'Footprints of the New Age' and 'True Catholicism' by Barrett. I desire to form a small circulating library soon as possible."

*From a Baptist Missionary.*

"DEAR SIR :—The Rev. — —, with whom I am at present a visitor, has lent me a copy of 'Progressive Thought,' etc., in which I am greatly interested, and of which I should like to have a copy. There are some questions of very solemn moment upon which I desire fuller light, and I am led to think the works of Swedenborg may be very helpful in the solution of some difficult theological problems, such as the Atonement, Heaven, Hell, etc. I have led a very active, busy life as a missionary for . . ., and subsequently as pastor of Baptist churches in ——. I have had little time for the full consideration of the truths presented by Swedenborg, though I have several times resolved to do so. Now that I have a little leisure, I should like to fulfill my intention before I settle down to regular work. . . .

"Many of our churches are dead—bound in the grave-clothes of ecclesiastical bondage and religious bigotry. I shall be glad if you can advise me in these important matters, and send me anything I ought to read. . . . At present I preach

only those truths upon which I have settled convictions—the things which I have *seen* and *heard* concerning the Word of life. . . .

“With Christian regards,

“Yours very sincerely, — — —.”

*From a University Professor.*

“I write to make a request. During the great revival of — I was illuminated by the Divine Spirit to the recognition and reception of truth, such as I afterwards found embodied in Swedenborg’s writings. I am desirous that the students of our University should have the opportunity of reading that great seer’s productions. But we have no available funds for their purchase. And if we had any, I should, perhaps, be considered as presumptuous in asking our Board of Trustees for their expenditure in the purchase of Swedenborg’s books.

“Having lately received the pamphlet entitled ‘Progressive Thought on Great Subjects’—for which I hereby express my sincere thanks—I have been impelled to inquire whether a donation of *all* Swedenborg’s volumes might not be made to us for our Library; or if not *all*, at least as many as may be gratuitously bestowed. I should consider them a great acquisition to our Library and a valuable aid to our students in their investigations and inquiries after truth.

“Sincerely yours, — — —.”

[Thirty-three volumes of our S. P. Association’s publications were sent as a donation to the Library here referred to, with the suggestion that possibly, by applying to the A. S. P. and P. Society of New York, a set of the unabridged works of E. S. might also be obtained *gratis*.—B.]

*From an Episcopal D. D. in Canada.*

"From a 'Notice to Ministers' on the cover of a book sent me by some unknown friend, I learn that the Swedenborg Publishing Association' will send its catalogue of publications to any minister on his application. I would be glad to receive the same. I am a minister of the Church of England, and some time ago I had my attention directed to the New Jerusalem Church. I am *very favorably* impressed with what I have learned of its doctrines, and *I want to know more*. I may even use the liberty, which I see you permit, of communicating with you by letter respecting these most important topics.

"Yours with the most sincere respect, — —."

*From a Baptist Minister in Illinois.*

"Some one has sent me a small book entitled 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects,' which I have read most carefully.

"Now I wish to say that I have been prejudiced against the teachings of Swedenborg. This arose from early training. . . . I have never seen any of his teachings until recently. But as I have a strong tendency toward investigation, I now propose to read for myself; for I know that I am personally responsible. I have been a Bible student for years, and at times I have felt that Bible truth was darkened by the opinions of men. But I have often noticed that when I went to God for aid, I received it. To comprehend the true meaning of the Scripture, we must have the aid of the Divine Spirit. . . .

"Now, Brother Barrett, as pastor of a Baptist church, I feel it a duty to investigate, and gain all the knowledge I can; and to this end I shall send for some of your Swedenborgian publications as soon as I have the means to spare, and would like all the help you can give me by letter and otherwise."



*From a Congregationalist in Nebraska.*

Having received a secular paper from Nebraska, containing a reprint of one of our "Leaflets" (No. 1, "Spiritual Recompense"), I wrote to the gentleman who sent me the paper (an entire stranger to me) thanking him for this unusual service so generously rendered, and asking a few questions. And in reply I received from him a long and very beautiful letter, and one which interested me all the more from the fact that the writer is not a *professed* (though I think he is a *real*) Newchurchman. The following is an extract from his letter:—

" . . . I read your little 'Leaflet, No. 1' (sent me in a letter by a friend), with unusual interest, and re-read it several times; and as opportunity permitted I gave it to one and another of my friends to read, and all seemed to be of one mind concerning it. To me it seemed to be a plain, simple statement of great truths and principles on which all thoughtful people could agree as laying at the root, or embodying much, of pure Christianity. Moreover, these were presented in language exceptionally clear and attractive, and in that respect specially fitted not only to commend them to the intellect, but to reach the heart, and to leave an impression which should be lasting—for good.

"With these feelings concerning it, and perhaps regarding it as a morsel of spiritual food providentially thrown in my way, not only for its influence upon my own soul, but perchance to pass along to others, I sent it, with a brief note expressive of my own views, to the editor of our *Journal*, who kindly gave it a place in his columns.

"It appeared in the daily and weekly, having a combined circulation of about 9000 copies. I took 500 extra copies, which, after marking the article, I mailed—say, about 50 to Editors of various religious papers, about 350 to clergymen of different denominations, mostly in the West; and the balance to personal friends.

"I am a member of the Congregational Church; one of the editors of the *Journal* is a leading Episcopalian, while the other makes no profession of religion; but I am sure we may be none the less happily harmonious in receiving and disseminating the principles of a pure Christianity, which we felt were commended to us in your little 'Leaflet.' "

*From a Baptist Minister in Pennsylvania.*

"DEAR BROTHER:—I write you this little note to express my gratification and thanks for the last book you were pleased to send me—'The New View of Hell.' I have thoroughly explored its contents, and must honestly confess that I have received from it *very much benefit*. And I could say more. . . .

"I think I am beginning to live in the *light*, in the *truth*, in the *way*—yes, I hope, in the '*Life of God*.' I am much indebted to you and some other New-Church authorities, and will bless the New Doctrines now and evermore.

"Yours faithfully, ———."

*From an Independent Minister.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have just finished a second reading of 'The Bible? or the Creed?' and can cordially say, Amen! to the good Christian common sense contained in your advice. . . .

"I always felt that I was a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that I owed allegiance first of all, and only, to Him,

. . . and that I was constrained by a supreme regard to his will and the eternal interests of his people, to preach to them the message He gave them.

"The Churches all seem to think that the people who have united with their communion are *their private property*; and that it is dishonest and wrong for a minister in any of them to preach any truth, however important or precious it may be, if it is not in harmony with the accepted creed of that church. But when a man comes forth in the name of his Master, with a message from Him, relating to the eternal well-being of the people over whom the Lord has placed him as pastor and teacher, he cannot afford to stand on matters of church etiquette, or pay much regard to the behests of any Sanhedrim, Synod, or Conference which would presume to prohibit him, because, forsooth, these people belonged soul and body to them; and they were going to see to it that their chattels should learn nothing about the Lord, life, or heaven, except what would please their masters."

*From an Episcopal Minister in Texas.*

"I have this moment finished your *True Catholicism*; and I wish it were in the hands of every minister of both the Old and the New Church, and of every member also. . . . I expect to write some sermons in which I shall largely use your book. . . . I am going to ask my brother of the Presbyterian ministry to read it. I am confident it is a work that he will enjoy."

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—I have read with great pleasure your excellent work, 'The Bible? or the Creed?' and heartily endorse every word of it. The advice you give the 'ministerial converts' I regard as the very best that can be given; for I have followed it for a number of years with the

most happy results. . . . Under the Lord's guidance, I felt myself directed to simply and quietly, yet honestly, preach the truth as I acquired it, and as my people could understand and receive it. . . .

"As to the cry raised of 'deception,' 'want of honesty,' etc., I take no account of it whatever. The simple fact is, the people want the *truth*; and the Lord, who owns the people, desires me, as his servant and minister, to give it to them; and this is what I am doing, and what I intend to do to the end of [my earthly] life. I *know* the Lord is satisfied with my course, and this is all that concerns me. And to the man who charges me with 'deceiving' the people by preaching as I do, I reply, that I thank the Lord for the privilege of deceiving men with the *truth as it is in Jesus*, and that I only wish I had been thus deceived many years before I was. . . .

"As you are aware, I am pastor of a large and flourishing church. The people generally (I know of no exception) are satisfied and delighted with the truth I give them from time to time, and are, with myself, gradually coming into greater light. They even now discourage an exchange with neighboring ministers, on account of the harshness of the old forms of doctrine taught in my absence. They love the truth for its own sake, and they like it all the better if it comes from a warm heart which has drunk in the loving and tender Spirit of the Lord. Of course, this is not the experience of all my people, but I trust they are all coming to it. I think they are."

*From a Minister of the Disciples' Church.*

"I have read every word of your *True Catholicism* with great pleasure; and can think of no more forcible expression of the effect produced by the reading than this: *I feel lifted up*. I wish it could be put in the *hand* and *heart* of every preacher in

the land. Could it be distributed as widely as its charity reaches, I doubt not the next Congress of Churches would urge a 'movement all along the line.' "

*From another Baptist Minister.*

"About four years ago I was introduced *providentially* to New-Church doctrines. In a house that I had purchased a pile of old books was left by the former owner; and after living in the house three or four years, one evening I was looking over the old books and came across one entitled 'Skepticism and Divine Revelation,' by John Ellis. I had never read anything about Swedenborg except what was derogatory to him; but I soon became interested in this book, and kept on reading until 12 or 1 o'clock at night. I felt as though I was in a new world; and I became so deeply interested by the time I had read the book through, that I at once sent for several other New-Church works [naming *five*] and 75 tracts. Since then I have spent most of my time studying and preaching the New Doctrines, although I have not made known their source except to a few persons who have been reading the books I have lent them. There are no New-Church people here; and as I am alone, I thought it the part of prudence, etc. . . . I am called upon to preach nearly all the funeral sermons in this section; . . . I find the people like the New Doctrines and are pleased to hear them; quite a number are investigating them, and I think the foundation is being laid for a society here."

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*EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1887.*

*From a Baptist Minister in New Jersey.*

"I know something of the teachings of Swedenborg; and what I have learned from him concerning the New Church has

led me to believe that his meaning is just what you are teaching. . . . Some of your people seem blind to the great change that is going on in the churches. Men of all denominations are longing to see the rent body of Christ healed with the fine health of beautiful and tender brotherhood.

"Every Christian who feels the warm heart of the Master beating in his, while reading the prayer that Jesus made for the unity of all who believe in Him, is intent, not upon emphasizing the difference between himself and his brothers, but rather feels called upon to emphasize that in which heart answers heart and face looks into face with the wonderful light of divine love that is at work knitting us all together in the heart of our blessed Lord."

*From an Episcopal Minister in Arkansas.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—Yours of the 29th ult. received. . . I have read 'The Question Answered' with unflagging interest. Your kindness in sending me this reading matter is keenly appreciated. I long to possess the Swedenborg Library, yet fear to seem importunate or exacting. I have found what my soul longed for. Swedenborg formulates my expressed and long suppressed fancies, dreamings, thoughts. He sets forth, as if by inspiration, much that I believe, and that others believe, too, but in secret, like Nicodemus. These are afraid of Church Councils and well meaning but irascible sectarian congregations.

"I shall move cautiously—necessity counsels caution. . . I pray for grace, for wisdom, to distribute the leaven judiciously. Your advice is sound, sensible, encouraging. . . To-day I have reexamined 'The Golden City.' It affords comfort. . . I pray for you humbly, but in all earnestness, that your abundant labors may be richly blessed. What help you afford me now, you extend to the New Church emphatically."

*From a Presbyterian Minister in Kansas.*

"A small book, entitled 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects,' has fallen into my hands; and upon close perusal it has almost fascinated me with the teachings which I suppose are to be found in Swedenborg's writings. And I am exceedingly anxious to give his works and those of kindred authors a thorough examination. But I am unable to purchase them at present. If you can furnish me with the 'Swedenborg Library' at a very low rate, and on easy terms, I shall try to buy it."

Of course, the 'Swedenborg Library' was sent to him at a *very* low rate, and on very easy terms.

*From a Methodist Minister in Maine.*

"DEAR BROTHER :—Enclosed find a P. O. order for \$2.00, for which please send 'The Science of Correspondences Elucidated,' by Madeley; 'Skepticism and Divine Revelation,' by Dr. Ellis; 'The Question—What are the Doctrines of the New Church?—Answered,' and 'The Man and his Mission.'

"I have been deeply interested in your 'True Catholicism' and 'The Golden City.' I have had some of Swedenborg's works in my library for years, but have not given them a thorough reading for two reasons: 1st, Prejudice growing out of false impressions; 2d, because of their peculiar style.

"Of late I have given 'Heaven and Hell' quite a close study. It is a wonderful book. . . A general distribution of your 'True Catholicism' would do much good. The world would be a thousand times better than it is could its teachings be generally received and reduced to practice."

*From a Methodist Minister in Georgia.*

"Enclosed find a P. O. money order for \$3.50. Please send the new edition of the 'Swedenborg Library' to ——— of ———, Ga. He is already a pretty good Newchurchman for

an old Methodist. I find quite a number of people who like the books and seem desirous to know more about Swedenborg. . .

"As I grow older my love for the blessed doctrines of the New Church grows stronger and stronger. Oh, how thankful I am that the good Lord has led me in my old age to a source of so much comfort—to such green pastures of love and flowing streams of living water."

*From a Universalist Minister in Pennsylvania.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your courteous note was duly received. . . I am much interested in your 'Golden City,' and should be pleased to read other works from your pen. I was also much interested in brother Ravlin's 'Progressive Thought.' I am glad to read the thoughts of men who have freed themselves in a large measure from traditional beliefs.

"I am satisfied that your interpretation of the visions of St. John is substantially correct. I have had the same general thought for some time, but have never worked it out in detail, being comparatively young and busy."

*From a Baptist Minister in Maine.*

"A short time ago I received a complete set (12 vols.) of the 'Swedenborg Library.' . . I must confess that in all my reading of books (and I have read many hundreds) I have found more *light*, more *help*, more *solid comfort* in these than in all other books *combined*. I have been preaching these thirteen years; and I shall study these books and open up the Gospel anew to my people as fast as I can *understand*. Shall send you *part* payment soon; and when these are paid for I will purchase all of Swedenborg's works.

"Many thanks to you for such help. May God bless you all is my prayer."



*From an Episcopal Minister in Australia, ordering nearly \$20 worth of our books.*

"MY DEAR MR. BARRETT:—I have wished for some time to write in reply to your kind invitation to ministers interested in the New Christianity to communicate with you. I waited, however, until I could send at the same time for some books. For some years back I have felt that theological books were of value almost entirely in proportion as they agree with Swedenborg's teaching, and prefer to devote my time to the study of those which set forth his doctrines. I have, and have read your valuable 'Swedenborg Library,' and have the Arcana Coelestia, T. C. R., H. H. and A. R. I cannot get on at all fast with the A. C., though I find so much that is valuable in it. I have your 'Golden City' and 'Letters on the Future Life.' I am particularly at one with you in regretting any founding of the New Church as a *sect*, believing that it is on a higher plane than the old churches, and so does not clash with them.

"I endeavor to teach what I learn to be truth, without leaving my position as a minister of the Church of England. It is my wish to deal fairly and honestly, and I make no secret of my views, while not forcing them upon the notice of my superiors. I think that if they are dissatisfied with me it is their place to take me to task. But my Bishop seems to avoid carefully any subjects of controversy; so I have gone on hitherto without any difficulties. I lend books, as I see the opportunity, to my brethren and others. I believe the true object of the Church of England is to bring men to Christ, and that is what I desire to do above all else. Some expressions in our formularies jar upon me a good deal, and I wish they could be expunged. But the best hope of attaining this end seems to me to be, to try to educate opinion inside of the church. . . .

"I have no opportunity of meeting any one who has gone

so far as myself in these studies; for I live in a very small community, and seldom am able to go out of it. I find, however, great readiness on the part of many of the laity to accept the new views, and in many cases find that they are already somewhat familiar with them.

"I thank you very sincerely for your 'Friendly Suggestions to Ministers.' Some friends of mine, hearing that I was about to write for books, have asked me to get some for them also. I enclose a list with Post Office order and addresses.

"With brotherly love, and thanks for very much advice, comfort and instruction derived from your books, believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

" ——— ———."

*From a Young Minister in Kentucky.*

"I am a young minister of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and for the past seven years I have been studying preparatory to entering upon the work—preaching occasionally.

"But during the past summer I providentially came across a little book entitled 'Progressive Thought on Great Subjects.' I have read and re-read it. And the result is, a great hungering and thirsting has come into my heart to know more of the teachings of the 'New Christianity.' I am anxious to possess the *best* works on the subject, and would be glad to have your advice as to what ones I had better purchase first. Please send me a catalogue of your Association's publications.

"Your Brother in love of the Truth."

*From a Presbyterian Minister in Indiana.*

"DEAR BROTHER:—Please send me at once by express 'Arcana Cœlestia' (10 vols.), 'Apocalypse Explained' (6 vols.); second-hand, if in first-class order, will answer.

"Also send me the 20 volumes offered in your circular, 'A

Rare Opportunity.' Please enclose bill when you send them; and hurry them up. I am getting out of reading, and *hungering* for more. So forward at once, and oblige."

*From another Presbyterian Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT :—Without a previous introduction, or a formal beginning, I write you, craving a little of the advice and sympathy proffered by you to those newly enlightened in the inner meaning of the Word of the Lord.

"For several years I have been preaching the truth as I have found it in the writings of E. S. I am pastor of a Presbyterian church, and have never met with the least difficulty in the work from having preached the new doctrine. On the contrary, wherever I go I am well received and gladly listened to. My people seem to me to be growing in knowledge and spirituality.

"I have read a great many of Swedenborg's works. I have the A. C., T. C. R., A. R., H. & H. and 'Science of Correspondences,' by Madeley. I need more, but am not now able to purchase. As soon as possible will get A. E.

"I have read the statement of principles in the first issue of your paper, and can heartily subscribe to them. . . I have preached for twenty years in the Presbyterian church. Was educated by the church, and feel at times the meanness and ingratitude it would be to come out and decry against my own mother. But so many are being led astray, and will not change while the church makes their form of belief—or declares essentials and non-essentials in creed.

"Would it be better for me to go on as I have in the past—teaching and leading others to see the truth that must eventually overturn the old—or to withdraw at once?

"Another serious question. My wife and four children must be educated, clothed and fed. If I give up my position, income must cease. Please give me your advice."

We immediately wrote this brother, giving him our advice as requested, and sending him some pamphlets; and soon after we received from him the following letter:—

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—Yours of the 22d just received. 'The Bible? or the Creed?' and 'Response to *N. C. Messenger*' came several days ago.

"Your advice suits my feelings better than any other that could have been given. I could think of no move more painful to me now than that of cutting loose from the mother to whom I owe my education and standing. Nevertheless, if the Lord should require it, I would not hesitate.

"My successor in a former field (Rev. ———) spent the night with me last week. I find he is sorely perplexed, telling me his struggles with doubts and the old system of belief. I gave him 'Progressive Thought,' and begged him to read S.'s works. He frankly confessed he was afraid to read. I told him my own struggles, and called to his mind his call of God, which no human church had the authority to limit. No creed has any authority over the Bible or the human intellect. He promised to read, and I think he will preach the truth as he sees it.

"I find no trouble with the people I preach to, but occasionally a stranger comes in who smells heresy. The Presbytery, I think, will never attempt to unsettle me for opinions that are not brought to their notice.

"Enclosed find one dollar for THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. I find it the most to my mind of anything I have yet seen. May the dear Lord spare you many years to do the work needed so much in our day and age."

*From another Presbyterian Minister.*

"The first number of THE NEW CHRISTIANITY impressed me favorably—especially that splendid article, 'The New Doctrine of the Lord.' Of course, you are aware that your presentation of the subject is not really new, though probably new to the masses. Many ministers and thinking laymen have held the same views for years. No doubt many intelligent men in the old churches use the old phraseologies in their utterances; but not with the former meaning. They put 'new wine' in 'old bottles,' and the old bottles are capable of great expansion, and therefore do not burst *at once*.

"Ah, well; as to the ultimate result, let us leave it to the All-wise God. One thing is certain, many articles of 'creeds' and 'confessions' need revision—notably those relating to the 'Atonement.' . . The language of the pulpit is too often misleading. . . Here I must stop. Much success to you. I may write you a short article now and then if acceptable."

*From a Baptist Minister in Illinois.*

"EDITORS NEW CHRISTIANITY.

"DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been carefully perusing the copy of your paper which you kindly sent me; and the reading thereof has awakened within me a desire to know more of the New Christianity as revealed by the ever blessed and loving Saviour to those who walk close to Him and desire to partake of his nature.

"The subjects, 'The New Doctrine of the Lord,' 'A Word to Ministers,' 'The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of Bigotry,' were especially interesting to me. And I feel that I must take the paper, and must have a few books—though my means are meagre. I enclose a P. O. order for \$5.60, for which please send me:

"THE NEW CHRISTIANITY, for one year; The Swedenborg Library (cheap edition); Ends and Uses; The Man and his Mission; The Question—What are the Doctrines of the New Church?—Answered; The Garden of Eden; Heaven Revealed; The New View of Hell. And if you please, send me 'The Bible? or The Creed?' and oblige

"Yours in Christ, ——— ———."

In the above letter we recognize the spirit of an honest, humble, earnest seeker after truth; and all such seekers are sure to find. Should not every minister of the Gospel be such a seeker?

*From a Congregational Minister in California.*

"I am greatly pleased with THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. It must do good. I have been a reader of the works of Swedenborg for many years. Have H. & H., T. C. R., A. R., etc., and find great profit in them, though I am in the ministry of the Congregational Church, and have been for over twenty years. I very much want *all* of the works, but have a large family and can't see my way to get them just yet. I send enclosed \$1.00 for the paper.

"Truly yours in the Lord,

"——— ———."

*From an Episcopal Minister in Mississippi.*

"I have just read a sample copy of your paper. I have also read a good deal of Swedenborg's writings, and find him to be a marvelously spiritual man. . . I can't imagine how any one seeking to be led by the spirit of God can fail to find in every page of his writings the deepest spiritual revelations and the sweetest spiritual food."

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1838.

*From a Congregational Minister in Maine.*

"DEAR SIR:—Some years since, . . . when my more systematic studies of Swedenborg began, I found in him a well-conceived body of philosophy, of ecclesiastical history. In your admirable little book, 'The Golden City,' I find Swedenborg's elaboration elaborated. For a long time I had been dreaming a dream of something, which, could I attain it, might be called The Science of Man and Society in Communion with the Lord. Your book is the best contribution toward such a science that I have seen.

"Swedenborg's writings seem to me not so much like some books about God and man, and the earth and the heavens, as a cosmos inviting explorers and patiently awaiting its Humboldt. . . . In the books you have sent me, you have afforded me facilities for seeing some things in clearer light than I have ever seen them before. I cannot say I accept all you see, perhaps only because I do not yet see it. But in some things you help me more than any interpreter I have met. In Wilkinson I get lost, and I must shabbily confess *I want to get lost*, in the splendor of his rhetoric. Henry James troubles me by the incessant struggle, seen in every one of his sentences, to formulate some burning thought of his own which yet he has not himself fully comprehended, and make it one with some far greater and deeper thought of Swedenborg which, it seems, he is trying to open.

"But 'The Golden City' and 'The True Catholicism' come down pat to the wants of a common man, and help me on many of the little things in Swedenborg's world, the want of a simple and right knowledge of which holds the mind back

from knowing some of the great things. If these books could be honestly and thoroughly read by every clergyman in the United States, it seems to me such reading ought to issue in a sunburst of light across the continent."

*From an Episcopal Minister.*

"Enclosed find postal note for \$1.00, which I wish applied on my subscription to THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. And please change the address from — to —, where I expect to spend the coming winter.

"We cannot do without your paper. My wife has become a firm believer in the doctrines of Christianity as expounded by Swedenborg, and I am but a few steps behind her.

"I wish you would occasionally send some of your pamphlets or other matter to the following persons in —. They have become interested by reading some of the books and papers sent to me."

*From an Episcopal Minister in Michigan.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—I thank you heartily for your letter of May 7th and the kind words it contained; and especially for the copy of your book, 'The Golden City.' I have read it carefully and prayerfully, and feel that it is the right book at the right time; and if all Christian ministers could read it and would embrace its teachings, I think the cause of our blessed Master would be wonderfully benefited thereby.

"I have now read quite a number of the publications of the 'Swedenborg Publishing Association,' including THE NEW CHRISTIANITY; and there is no periodical taken in my family that is more heartily welcomed or more diligently read than this. . . . I have read nearly all of the 'Swedenborg Library' (the six-volume edition) and have been greatly benefited thereby. I was deeply interested in 'The True Catholicism,'



and could wish that all Christian ministers and laymen would govern themselves by the doctrines and teachings therein contained. I am now reading as I find time 'The Science of Correspondences,' by Madeley, and am much interested in it.

"I subscribed for THE NEW CHRISTIANITY for six months and will renew my subscription soon. My dear wife has become a firm believer in the doctrine of the New Church, and she wishes me to say that she has received much personal benefit from both your paper and your books."

This brother sent, in the same letter, for the following works: "Letters on the Divine Trinity," "Heaven Revealed," "The New View of Hell," "Lectures on the New Dispensation," "Letters on Spiritual Subjects" by Dr. Holcombe.

*From an Independent Missionary.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—Your postal of the 25th inst. with bill of books received. Enclosed find postal note for amount.

"Our books are being read more widely than ever before; but it requires time for the seed thus sown to germinate.

"I find that what I do in this line must be done quietly, without arousing the antagonism of the churches.

"Our readers are found in nearly all the different denominations. Some of them are active Sabbath-school teachers, etc., in their respective churches; and if it was known generally that they were studying the New-Church doctrines and receiving them, it would hinder their usefulness in their present field of labor.

"My advice to such is : Stay right where you are, and communicate the light which you receive to others as fast as they are able to receive it.

"And in following this plan I think I will accomplish more good than if I were preaching to a regularly organized New-Church Society. I am desirous (as soon as I am able) to establish a free library of select New-Church books. Such books as I have, I freely loan to whoever I can get to read them. In this way, and by private conversation, I am doing effective work in a way that does not arouse antagonism on the part of the churches.

"The woman must abide in the wilderness yet a while until we can get the *conditions* right. I am doing what I can to bring about such conditions as will favor the influx of heavenly light into the minds of the masses. For the New Church is not to be a rich man's church ; it is for all.

"Fraternally yours,

" ——— ———."

*From a Baptist Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT :— . . . As time and health permit, I have read much of New-Church literature. I have read with a sincere desire for the truth for its own sake. I accept Swedenborg's teachings as fully as does any member of the external New Church. I can *see* the truth as I read his works. I also preach the truth as it is in Jesus to the best of my ability. If I think it aids the truth, I mention Swedenborg's name ; otherwise I do not. My object wholly is to reach the hearts of men with the saving truths of the Gospel, and I vary my methods according to the exigency of each case.

"My preaching is well received by all ; in fact, the more spiritual portion of my hearers want nothing else. They especially

want the whole Godhead in the Lord alone, and to be fully resurrected at death. They have, almost to a man, no sympathy with the old forms of doctrine.

"Believing, as I do, that no man is qualified to preach a perfect Gospel without an acquaintance with Swedenborg's teachings, I would advise my brethren in the ministry everywhere to throw away their prejudices and to study the works of Swedenborg, looking alone to the Lord for spiritual light. I assure them from experience it will come to their utmost joy and delight. I think, too, THE NEW CHRISTIANITY will materially help them. I have also received valuable aid from the NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER and NEW-JERUSALEM MAGAZINE. Your paper, however, has a special mission in reaching new beginners, and exciting popular attention to the Heavenly Doctrines.

"Yes; I have tried both systems well; there is no comparison between them except by way of contrast. 'Beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.' I have about given up the reading of the old books on Theology; they starve me out and out if I keep long at them, while the Heavenly Doctrines nourish my soul more and more as I grasp them.

"You are doing a good work with your newspaper, THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. Don't get weary, but keep right at it, and the Lord, I am sure, will bless your efforts. You have my utmost sympathy."

*From the President of the Connecticut New-Church Association.*

"That Madeley's 'Science of Correspondences' is performing a great use I am convinced by the numerous letters I receive from clergyman to whom the book has been sent.

Some Newchurchmen, I know, do not approve of sending out the collateral works, thinking the works of Swedenborg should be sent instead. But I have letters from some clergymen who say they have tried to read Swedenborg, but that he wants an interpreter; they cannot make head or tail of what he says.

"Last week I received a letter from a Methodist clergyman who said he had perception enough to see that the explanations given in the 'Science of Correspondences' were true, but they were beyond his depth; he could not grasp them. Letters of this kind rather upset the theory of some of our friends. People generally are not yet in a state, in my judgment, to read and understand the writings of Swedenborg; and they have got to be fed with the truths of the New Church brought down to their capacity; and I am more and more convinced that the work the Connecticut New-Church Association is doing, is an essential preliminary to people's taking hold of Swedenborg's works hereafter."

*From an Independent Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—I have received and read all the numbers of THE NEW CHRISTIANITY, and have been benefited by reading it. Years ago I carefully and prayerfully read nearly all of Swedenborg's writings; consequently I was familiar with the truths presented in THE NEW CHRISTIANITY before I received it.

"These truths have brought me to realize that I am nothing, that the Lord is all in all to me, that 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;' and just to the extent I realize these and other great truths in my own experience, I *am* able to preach Christ Jesus the Lord to others. . . . I preach the truth as I understand it, according to the grace given me. I can do nothing more or less. The people generally express themselves

as well satisfied, and as greatly benefited by what they learn. How can the divine truth be anything else than helpful to any soul open to receive it? It is only persons who are imbued with the sectarian spirit who express dissatisfaction. And as their objections are misrepresentations of what I preach, they amount to nothing against the truth. It is *their* church—their creed—they are concerned about.

“I would earnestly advise my brethren in the ministry to lay aside every prejudice, to look to the Lord for his guidance, to seek and follow the truth at all hazards, and to keep themselves open to it, it matters not what channel it may come through. If they will read New-Church writings and periodicals in this spirit, receiving the truth only as they are able to apprehend it, they will find great enlargement in the knowledge and love of the Lord.”

*From a Congregational Minister.*

“I have been decidedly helped by reading THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. I find in it ability, catholicity, and spirituality, each in a high degree; and I find it a positive help in life, faith and work.

“I have been something of a student of Swedenborg for years. There is much in his books which I do not understand; some things which I do not believe; but many things I accept and teach in my public ministrations. Sometimes, in making use of his thought, I mention its source. At other times, where popular ignorance is so dense, and where I have reason to believe that prejudice would prevent the reception of a truth which I know would be gladly and profitably received if an obnoxious name were not coupled with it, I preach the truth and omit the name.

“I always preach my sermons to myself first. The sermons

which I like best, and which seem the most generally acceptable to my hearers, are usually those whose exegesis of the truths of the Word is found in the Writings. I know of no richer source of preparation for my prayer meeting than may be found in half an hour with Swedenborg before going to the place where 'prayer is wont to be made.' . . .

"For men whose native turn of mind and whose reading are such as to qualify them for understanding him, I know of no richer religious literature than Swedenborg's books. I advise all the world to read them as fast and as far as they can. . . . Your paper and your books I regard as the most helpful interpreters of Swedenborg with which I am acquainted.

"I and my people have been helped and uplifted by all deep Theologies, Old and New ; but *incomparably* more by the New than by the Old."

*From a Methodist Minister—Addressed to the Connecticut New-Church Association.*

"DEAR FRIENDS :—The copy of 'The Science of Correspondences Elucidated,' that you so kindly sent me, came in due time and in good order.

"I am highly pleased with the book. I regard it as a valuable addition to my library. You are doing a good work by sending out this book. It is full of information from cover to cover. The very foot-notes are worth more than the retail price of the book. The reading of the author—or authors—as indicated by these foot-notes, must have been very extensive.

"The book sets forth the Science of Correspondences so plainly that it may well be said to be 'elucidated.

"That there is more in the Bible than the mere literal history, any reflecting person must have discovered before

hearing of a Science of Correspondences. But when all is set forth systematically the Sacred Volume becomes luminous with spiritual light.

"The Appendix sets forth concisely and helpfully the genuineness and authenticity of the books that make up the Bible. I appreciate the small volumes that accompanied the work of Madeley. They give the pith of Swedenborg's doctrines and are valuable to those who have not the time nor the means to master the volumes of that prodigious writer.

"I want to thank you heartily for your generosity and help."

*From a Minister in Michigan.*

"Please accept my hearty thanks for the books so kindly sent me, 'The Science of Correspondences' and 'The New-Church Theology.' I am diving into the views of the New Church as much as I have time and opportunity. New views of the Word of God and a new life are mine by these books.

"I was taught to hate the New Church, and was much prejudiced; but I am glad that I have been induced to read and study for myself. May the Lord prosper you in your work. I have to be cautious, lest I should hinder the work I am trying to do, and this because people are prejudiced as I was."

*From a Methodist Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:— . . . I have been for several years a reader of New-Church writings, and continue to read them; and I try to present the principles therein contained, both publicly and privately. But as I do not believe the truth depends for its efficacy upon the human channel through which it comes to us, and as it would probably drive some away from it to mention Swedenborg as authority, I do not do so. I enforce all by the authority of the Prophets and the Apostles. I

find no resistance to the truths thus presented. Many are indifferent, but some are interested.

"I would advise every minister who wishes to be a *leader* of his flock, and not to be *driven* by them, to read up on the new things which are the life of all modern theology and preaching. I am familiar with both the Old and the New Theology, having studied and preached both; and I can say *decidedly* that the New has most 'enlightened, uplifted and blessed my own soul,' and the souls of those whom I am trying to lead in the heavenly way.

"Wishing you abounding success in your enterprise, I am, as ever,

Respectfully yours,

"———."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1889.

*From a Presbyterian Minister.*

"B. F. BARRETT.

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am a minister in the Presbyterian Church; and about one year ago some one sent me 'Progressive Thought on great Subjects,' by N. F. Ravlin; and after carefully examining it, I sent for 'The True Christian Religion,' 'The Apocalypse Revealed,' and 'Heaven and Hell,' out of which I got some of the grandest thoughts that I ever got anywhere. And in speaking of them to Brother ——, he told me there was a paper published by the Swedenborg Association that was the best religious paper he had ever read; and also that there were sermon pamphlets published which were calculated to lead any one into the light as he had never seen it before. And from what I have gathered from him, and from the books that I have, I think it is just the doctrine I have



longed to preach, but could not exactly get at it ; but I believe I have now struck the right lead, and that it will conduct me in a path in which preaching will not be such a task, but a delight. . . .

" I may correspond more freely with you in the near future.

" Your Brother in Christ,

" — — —."

*From a Congregational Minister in Louisiana.*

" DEAR BROTHER BARRETT :—If you will send me some of your little envelope circulars, I will distribute them wherever I think they will do good. I am much attached to the New Christianity. It is light in darkness compared with the Old Theology. I have been reading Swedenborg for years, and am much benefited. His writings are the dawn of a New Age.

" Fraternally yours,

" — — —."

*From a Minister of the Reformed Church.*

" I enclose one dollar in renewal of my subscription to THE NEW CHRISTIANITY. Wish I could make it much more. . . . I have been induced to remain where I am mainly through your paper ; what it says of the New Church, not a sect but a new view, a new life and spirit, I cordially accept.

" Some time ago I met a New-Church minister who ridiculed the idea of my remaining pastor of a Reformed church with my views. . . . But the Reformed Church, conservative as it is, is gradually changing, as are all of the other old churches.

" I am sure I can do no better than to keep right on where I am, trying to spread the New Christianity in the old churches. I am much pleased with the broad-minded spirit of your paper. There is some good in the old churches ; they are not altogether in a state of vastation. Fraternally yours.

" — — —."

*From a Minister in Illinois.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—I have received the pamphlets and papers I sent for, and am greatly pleased with them; and in perusing them I have become more interested in the doctrines of the New Church.

"I took a few of them with me to my appointment last Sunday; and when we had a few spare moments I would read from them, and the people were very much delighted with them.

"I now enclose \$2.15, for which please send me the 'Science of Correspondences Elucidated,' 'Lectures on the New Dispensation,' and 'The True Catholicism: Revealing the Breadth and Comprehensiveness of the New Christian Church.' These are the three I have selected for the present. There are many more that I should like, but will investigate these first; then, as I am able, I will order others. . . . I repeat, that I am well pleased with all the N. C. documents I have read, and I am hungering for more. . . . May God bless you in this work."

*From a Presbyterian Minister in Ohio.*

"EDITORS NEW CHRISTIANITY.

"DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find enclosed my remittance for your paper for next year, as per terms given to all ministers—one dollar a year.

"I am a Presbyterian minister; but I find THE NEW CHRISTIANITY quite a refreshing paper. I value it mainly because of its stimulus to thinking. I do not think your editorial articles are essentially different from views entertained by thoughtful men in other denominations; but your manner of presentation has the refreshing air of novelty, which I relish very much.

"On the surface the old creeds are what they used to be; and yet in the actual presentation of the Old Gospel new terms

are largely employed. . . . Whether the 'New Heaven' or the Old One is at the bottom of this great change, certainly we moderns cast our thoughts in different moulds from the old Christian teachers. I suppose that the 'New Christianity' is really NEW only in the sense that a tree is new when it puts forth new foliage in the spring. Wishing you much success,

"I am yours truly,

" — — —."

*From a Licentiate in the Baptist Church.*

"REV. B. F. BARRETT.

"DEAR BROTHER :—Will you be so kind as to permit me to encroach upon your valuable time for a few moments? I am desirous of entering the ministry, and have been studying and preparing myself for that vocation for some time. I am nominally a Baptist, though in reality a Newchurchman. . . . While fully in accord with the New Church as to doctrine, I have a great repugnance to the *intense sect* spirit and high-Church tendencies which seem almost universally in vogue. I simply cannot abide them. . . .

"I desire to express my obligations to you for the benefit I have derived from your wise and catholic teachings. I can only hope that the Lord has made you an instrument of as great benefit to other readers of your teachings."

*From a Minister in Iowa.*

"REV. B. F. BARRETT.

"MY DEAR AND VENERABLE BROTHER :—Allow me to thank you heartily for the two books you sent me. I have read and re-read them with great spiritual gain and delight. I rejoice in seeing the dawning glory of the New heaven and earth in my own soul. I feel truly that God is in the New-Church work, and I want to see the fullness of its light and love."

*From an Orthodox Minister in Mississippi*

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have carefully read your little work, 'The True Catholicism,' which you so kindly sent me. I not only read to the 'Sixth Chapter,' but actually began at the preface and went through to the advertisements on the fly-leaves. . . .

"I find myself very much in sympathy with you on the Trinity, the nature of the Atonement, etc. With what is denominated the popular orthodox statement of these doctrines I am by no means agreed.

"I certainly appreciate your kindness in sending me your little work. The spirit it breathes is one of 'true catholicism.' I thank God every time I am permitted, either face to face or in print, to hold communion with such a truly Christian spirit.

"May our dear Lord bless you abundantly.

"Yours in love of the truth,

"— — —."

*From a Minister who has been reading the New Doctrines for several years.*

". . . I have as yet seen no reason to take a single step backward. More and more clearly the light has shone on all these great truths, until they have unfolded in a clearness and fullness satisfying reason, conscience, and the conditions of Christian life, making the present rich in mental and spiritual resources and the future glorious in hope.

"And in reaching these results, honesty compels me to acknowledge that I am largely indebted to the wonderful teachings of the great Swedish seer. . . . No man has ever been so cruelly misrepresented and slandered as he. . . . I believe he was the divinely prepared seer and prophet of the New Dispensation of truth and life now descending upon our world.

He saw and foretold it a century ago. And while the advancing Christian minds of our day are turning away unfed and dissatisfied with the old dogmas of the past, his writings are coming to be sought after as never before.

"I advise every candid and honest seeker after the truth to investigate his teachings. . . . Especially should ministers investigate them, if for no other reason than that they may cease to disgust intelligent hearers with their ignorant denunciation of what they know nothing about, at the same time confirming their ignorant hearers in their ignorance. No minister's theological education is complete until he has mastered at least the grand teachings of 'The True Christian Religion.'"

*From a distinguished Congregational Minister.*

"MY DEAR SIR:—By the kindness of Mr. —, I have received your excellent little book, 'True Catholicism.' Like everything else you have written, the book is full of the spirit of a genuine Christianity. I find myself heartily assenting as I read, and very glad to get the testimony upon these vital points of that seer and teacher—Emanuel Swedenborg. Truly he was a wonderful man. Doubtless he needs interpreters. I wish they could all be as broad-minded and catholic as you are."

*From a Presbyterian Minister in Missouri.*

"REV. B. F. BARRETT.

"MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter and books are received, and have been read with much interest. I am heartily in sympathy with the teaching of the New Church, and have been embodying the new thoughts in my sermons. And my people relish them very much."

*From a Methodist Minister in Texas.*

"BROTHER BARRETT:—I have read your works on the 'New Dispensation,' 'Future Life' and 'New View of Hell' with the greatest satisfaction. They seem to be Scriptural, reasonable

and well calculated to popularize the truths of Swedenborg, several of whose works also I have read. I am pastor of a Methodist church, and do not hesitate to preach the truths of the New Dispensation on all suitable occasions."

*From a Congregational Minister.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—I take pleasure in sending you the enclosed order for literature. At last I can get some of my people—members of my church—to send for it. The half-dozen copies of your 'The Question, What are the Doctrines of the New Church? Answered,' etc., were ordered by a man named —, who was 'converted,' as we call it, a week and a half ago, but has not yet joined our church. He will soon, however. Your book did the work of satisfying all the theological doubts that had held him back so long, and then he needed only to be *moved* to surrender his will to God. He has gone right to work, and wants the arms that overcame him—your book, with God's spirit.

"I think I have things so well in hand in my church now, that I can soon have it *almost unanimous* for the *New* life and doctrine. The lady whose name I send for THE NEW CHRISTIANITY was my first convert after beginning my work in the ministry. She is a Christian after my own heart. She has read nearly all my books of Swedenborg. We have several others already sound and *coming*, who will soon be a working centre. God is blessing our work.

"Yours most earnestly and fraternally,

"— — —."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF 1890.

*From a Congregational Minister in Louisiana.*

"DEAR BROTHER BARRETT:—If you will send me some of your little envelope circulars, I will distribute them wherever I

think they will do good. I am much attached to the New Christianity. It is light in darkness compared with the Old Theology. I have been reading Swedenborg for years, and am much benefited. His writings are the dawn of a New Age.

"Faternally yours,

" — — —."

*From a Methodist Minister in Connecticut.*

"REV. B. F. BARRETT.

"MY DEAR CHRISTIAN BROTHER:—Although strangers in the flesh, the reading of your interesting paper for two years past (by the kindness of a friend) has created a feeling of kinship. . . . I have often desired to speak to you of my high appreciation of many things found in your paper, but have said to myself, 'No; it will be of little use; and why take the time of those whose hands and hearts are so full of important labors?'

"Reading to-day your article, 'Various Aspects of Religious Truth,' I said: 'I will write and let brother Barrett know how fully its statements agree with my views.' The adaptation of divine truth to meet the want of man in every possible condition, and every degree of intellectual capacity, is proof of its Divine source."

*From a leading Orthodox Minister.*

"DEAR MR. BARRETT:—Please send me a copy of 'The New View of Hell,' also a copy of 'Heaven Revealed,' and enclose bill. I will remit promptly, and may send for other books.

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"Now, there are other works of Swedenborg that I need—costing \$7.50 (very low, indeed)—but I am too poor to buy them. My work is a mission and my pay *very small*. Can you assist me to get the books, and can you send me some New-Church reading matter for distribution? For my standing I would refer you to the officers of the Universalist General Convention, Boston, Mass.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SWEDENBORG'S PREDICTIONS.

**A**FTER the Last Judgment, which occurred in the world of spirits in 1757, of the nature of which Swedenborg has given a full account, he tells us in general what effect that Judgment would have upon the world in which we are now living. Seeing, as he did, the intimate connection of the spiritual with the natural world, or of spirits in the interior with men in the exterior realm, he was able to see that the great change he had witnessed in the world of spirits must ere long exert a tremendous influence upon the people here on earth. And it did. It released men's minds from their previous state of thralldom. It opened their mental prison-houses. It introduced new light and liberty—new freedom of thought and action. It ushered in a New Era. And this is what Swedenborg said would inevitably follow.

#### *EFFECTS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT FORETOLD.*

“The state of the Lord's Kingdom on earth,” he says, “became different after the Last Judgment from

what it was before; as the reception of divine truth and good became thereby more universal, more interior, more easy, and more distinct."—*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1217.

"I have had," he further says, "much conversation with the angels about the state of the church hereafter. They said . . . they knew that the slavery and captivity in which the man of the church was formerly is removed; and that now, from restored liberty, he can, if he desires, more easily perceive interior truths; and thus be made more internal if he so wills."—*Last Judgment*, p. 74.

"The state of the world and of the church before the Last Judgment, compared with what it was to be thereafter, was as evening and night compared with morning and day."—"For since communication with heaven has been restored by the Last Judgment, man is able to be enlightened and reformed; that is, to understand the divine truth of the Word, to receive it when understood, and to retain it when received; for the interposing obstacles are removed."—*Contin. L. J.*, n. 12.

"After the Last Judgment was accomplished there was light in the world of spirits, because the infernal societies which *were removed* [by that Judgment] had been interposed like clouds which darken the earth. A similar light also then arose in men in the world, giving them new enlightenment."—*Ibid.*, n. 30.

"With respect to the state of the church, this will be dissimilar hereafter. It will be similar, indeed, in

the *outward form*, but dissimilar in the *inward*. To outward appearance divided churches will exist, and their doctrines will be taught, as heretofore; and the same religions will exist among the gentiles as at present. But henceforth the man of the church [that is, the men of Christendom generally] will be in a more free state of thinking on matters of faith, that is, on spiritual things which relate to heaven, because spiritual liberty has been restored to him." (*Last Judgment*, n. 73.)

#### THESE PREDICTIONS VERIFIED.

The above statements were made by Swedenborg more than a hundred and thirty years ago; and we appeal to the well-known record of what has transpired during that period in verification of their truth. Do not the history of theological opinion since 1757, the increased and steadily increasing religious liberty throughout the world, and the changes which have taken place in the doctrinal beliefs, as well as in the dominant spirit of nearly all the churches, confirm the truth of his statements, and warrant the conclusion that some such event as he describes did actually occur in the world of spirits at that time? The written creeds, it is true, have undergone but little change; and *to outward appearance* the churches remain nearly as they were. But *inwardly* they are very different.

Inwardly they have been touched as by a new and rejoicing light. How differently the people of to-day *think* and *talk* on theological questions from what they did in 1757! How few now-a-days hold the same religious beliefs that were generally accepted then! How few now really expect to be saved by faith *alone*! All are beginning to look upon *right living* as indispensable to salvation. Few believe the old dogmas of infant damnation, imputed righteousness, unconditional election and reprobation, or a hell of literal fire and brimstone. These dogmas may still be found in the written creeds; but they are not among people's real beliefs—certainly not among their deep convictions, as they once were. With respect to religious beliefs, therefore, it is plain that the Divine prediction, "Behold I make all things new," has been receiving its fulfillment during the last hundred years.

And not less in spirit than in doctrine are the churches everywhere being made new. In many of the denominations—perhaps in most of them—the old, hard, exclusive, sectarian, intolerant spirit is perceptibly dying out. Almost everywhere it is condemned as the spirit of anti-Christ; and quite a different spirit is beginning to take its place—a spirit more tolerant, charitable and just, more akin to the spirit that rules in heaven. Not that persecution for opinion has entirely ceased in the churches—I do not mean that.

But the persecutors are not now, as they were once, among the most influential classes. The best minds are everywhere coming to see, and practically to acknowledge, that unity of spirit is compatible with considerable diversity of belief; and that perfect agreement in all the minutiae of religious thought or doctrinal statement, is neither to be expected nor desired.

So that, along with the new intellectual convictions which thoughtful men and women in all the churches are gradually reaching, a new spirit is descending into the heart of humanity, softening, expanding, mellowing, sweetening, and gradually lifting it to loftier and serener summits. It is the spirit of the risen and ever-living Christ, whom the seer of Patmos beheld in vision seated upon the throne, and who is coming and proclaiming with new emphasis in the ears of the nations, "Behold I make all things new." As the author of that grand prose-poem, "The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ," truly says :—

"The humanities of the sermon on Mount Olivet, and the love that breathes through the Johannean discourses, never beat with more tender pulses than now, to move and inspire all the ecclesiasticisms of the Christian world. Worthier and lovelier views of the Divine character and attributes; zeal for Christ purged

of all bitterness from the gall of the unregenerate heart; tolerance of error in opinion; intolerance of wrong to any child of God, or of cruelty to any creature He has made; better theories of human nature and destiny; and better feelings of human fellowship that make every man, not only the image of God but the image of every other man,—these mark the advent of Christ, as John foresaw it,—Christianity displacing at length the old Judaism and heathenism, as the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. . . .

“There is not a denomination of Christendom, whose literature we are acquainted with, which does not show that the Spirit is coming within them with greater fulness and tenderness, making their theologies fluid in the love of Christ, as they reflect from his face in softer light the Beatitudes which He spake and lived.

“All this being so, another consequence inevitably follows. We cannot move towards the Christ without coming closer to each other. Leave out Him and his unitizing Word, and let every man strike out for himself, and we tend to a crumbling individualism, to endless distraction and confusion. But those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as the supreme authority and guide, and enter more into his all-revealing mind, are making progress towards the harmonizing truths

which He represents. However wide apart they may be at the start, their progress is ever on converging lines. Essential truth becomes more and more central and manifest, the non-essential falls away to its subordinate place, and orthodox and unorthodox move alike towards a higher and higher unity. It is not that any one sect is making a conquest of the others, but Jesus Christ is making a conquest of us all."—p. 513-'16.

#### *THE NEWNESS IN ALL THINGS.*

And in all the less vital but subsidiary human interests stupendous changes have taken place since 1757, and are still in progress, which nothing less than some great change in the supersensual realm can adequately account for. Cannot every one see that in science, philosophy, economics, literature, the mechanic arts, industrial processes, methods of education, modes of travel and communication—in everything, indeed, which pertains to the welfare and progress of our race, the Lord has been gradually making all things new?

We say, then, that the old Age or Dispensation—the old Church—the old system of doctrinal theology which had gathered strength and borne sway for more than fourteen centuries, lost its sovereignty at the



time of the Last Judgment. As a vital and controlling power on earth, it had reached its consummation. And thereupon a new Age was inaugurated. A new Morning dawned on the world. New light broke forth from the opening heavens. New thoughts and new freedom were born; new ideas of human rights and human destiny; new views of God, duty and immortality; and a new spirit began to pulsate in human hearts. The old Age went out and was succeeded by a new and brighter one, as every night is succeeded by a new day. Swedenborg illustrates the passing away of the Old and the coming of a New Church in this wise:—

“Every day begins in morning, progresses, ends in night, and then begins anew; every year also begins in spring, progresses through summer to autumn, closes in winter, and then begins again. It is similar with churches. . . . Furthermore, the church appears to the Lord as one man; and this grand man must pass through his stages of life like an individual, that is to say, from infancy to youth, from this to manhood, and finally to old age; and then when he dies, he will rise again.”—T. C. R. 762.

“Will rise again”—not as another individual, but as the same identical person renewed in spirit—blessed with new light and life. So the New Church, signified by the New Jerusalem, is not a new, separate,

and visible organization, but it is the same identical Church as that established more than eighteen centuries ago, but revived, renewed, or *re-established* by the Lord. For the reason why the key to the spiritual sense of the Word is now revealed, was, we are told, "that the Christian Church, which is founded on the Word . . . may again *revive* and draw breath through heaven from the Lord. (*Con. Love*, n. 532.) And more than twenty years before any New-Church organization existed on earth (1764), and when there were no open and known receivers of the new doctrines, we are told that "the Church called the New Jerusalem was daily increasing on earth." (*Ap. Explained*, n. 732.) The number of those who were "in the spiritual affection of truth," whatever their name or creed, and who were, therefore, in spiritual association with the New Heaven, was daily increasing; for a new and freer influx of light and life from the Lord had been inaugurated by the dispersion of the previously obstructing clouds in the world of spirits.

Thus the former Christian Church, overwhelmed and ruined by the falsities and evils in which it was immersed at the time of the Last Judgment, is, through the acknowledgment and rejection of these and the influx of new light and life from heaven, gradually rising to newness of life—decking herself in robes of beauty, and preparing for a closer and

more joyful marriage union with the Lord. This is the way the New Jerusalem was seen coming down "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

*ANOTHER PREDICTION FULFILLED.*

Near the close of his last great work, "The True Christian Religion," Swedenborg proceeds to tell how, or through what instrumentality, the New Church would be "established on earth." He says:—

"Just so far as this New Heaven, which constitutes the internal of the church with man, grows, so far does the New Jerusalem, that is, the New Church, descend from it. This, therefore, cannot take place in a moment, but takes place as the falsities of the former Church are removed. For what is new cannot enter where falsities have previously been implanted, unless these falsities be first rooted out; and this uprooting will take place, first with the clergy, and thus, through them [as means or instruments] with the laity." (T. C. R., n. 784.)

Now, whoever reads the previous chapters of the present volume cannot fail to see that this prediction of the Lord's chosen servant is surely receiving its fulfillment in our own day. For he will see that here are more than a hundred Christian ministers who have uprooted from their own minds the falsities of the former church, and are now quietly uprooting the same from the minds of their people, and implanting

the new truths in place of the old errors: And these more than one hundred constitute, as we have abundant reason to believe, but a small fraction of the clergy who are to-day engaged in this good and beneficent service. We cannot doubt that many hundreds—possibly some thousands—of Christian ministers in our own land, of whom we have never heard, are now doing the same noble work—and doing it all the more effectually for not exciting the fears or shocking the prejudices of their people by any reference to Swedenborg or the New Church. And our reason for so believing is based upon the fact, that within the last fifteen years more than a hundred thousand volumes of the larger and most important works of Swedenborg have been sent to the ministers in our country and Canada at their own request; and more than two hundred thousand of his smaller works, including many volumes of “The Swedenborg Library,” and more than ten thousand copies of Madeley’s “Science of Correspondences Elucidated,” and other collateral New-Church works. Most of these have been sent gratuitously, the ministers remitting merely the amount of postage on the larger works.

We may safely conclude, therefore, that the amount of New-Church literature received and read by the clergy in America since 1875 has greatly exceeded that of any other denomination of Christians. And in

this wide circulation of the new truths from heaven among the clergy, and the quiet insemination of many, if not all, of them among the people of their respective flocks, do we not see the manifest fulfillment of what Swedenborg predicted a hundred and twenty years ago concerning the descent of the New Jerusalem, or the chief instruments in the dissemination of the new and heavenly doctrines? And can we not also see here the chief cause (not primary, of course, but secondary) of the growing dissatisfaction among the clergy with the old creeds, and the loud and increasing demand of some of their most advanced thinkers and ablest and best men, for a revision of their Catechisms and Confessions of Faith? This tumultuous agitation in so many theological circles—this roaring of the ecclesiastical sea and waves—the distress and perplexity of those who still cling to the old dogmas—the hearts of many “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming”—all this indicates growth and progress. It is a healthy and a hopeful sign; yea, a sign of the coming of the Son of Man with new power and glory.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”—Luke xxi : 28.

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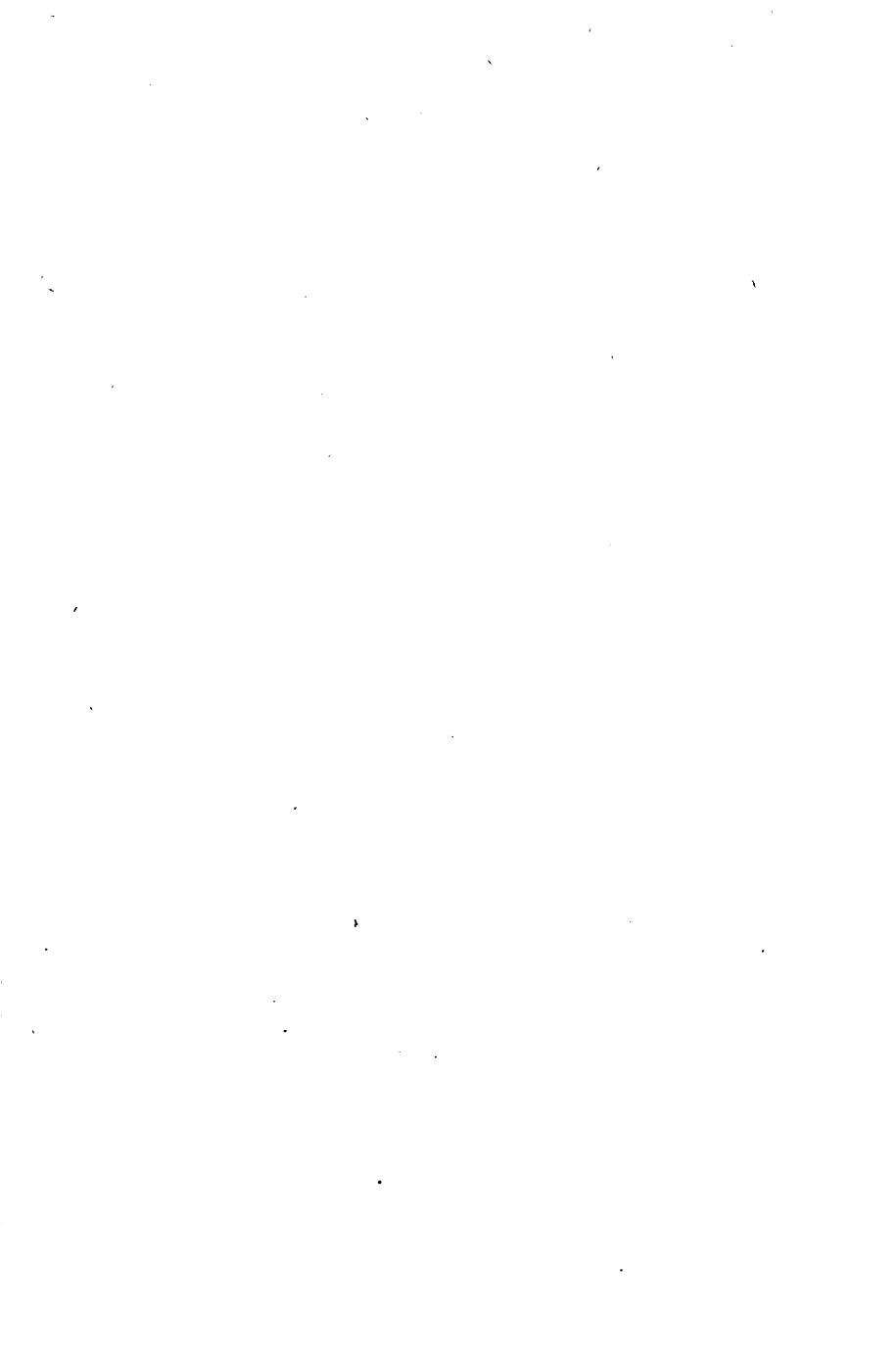
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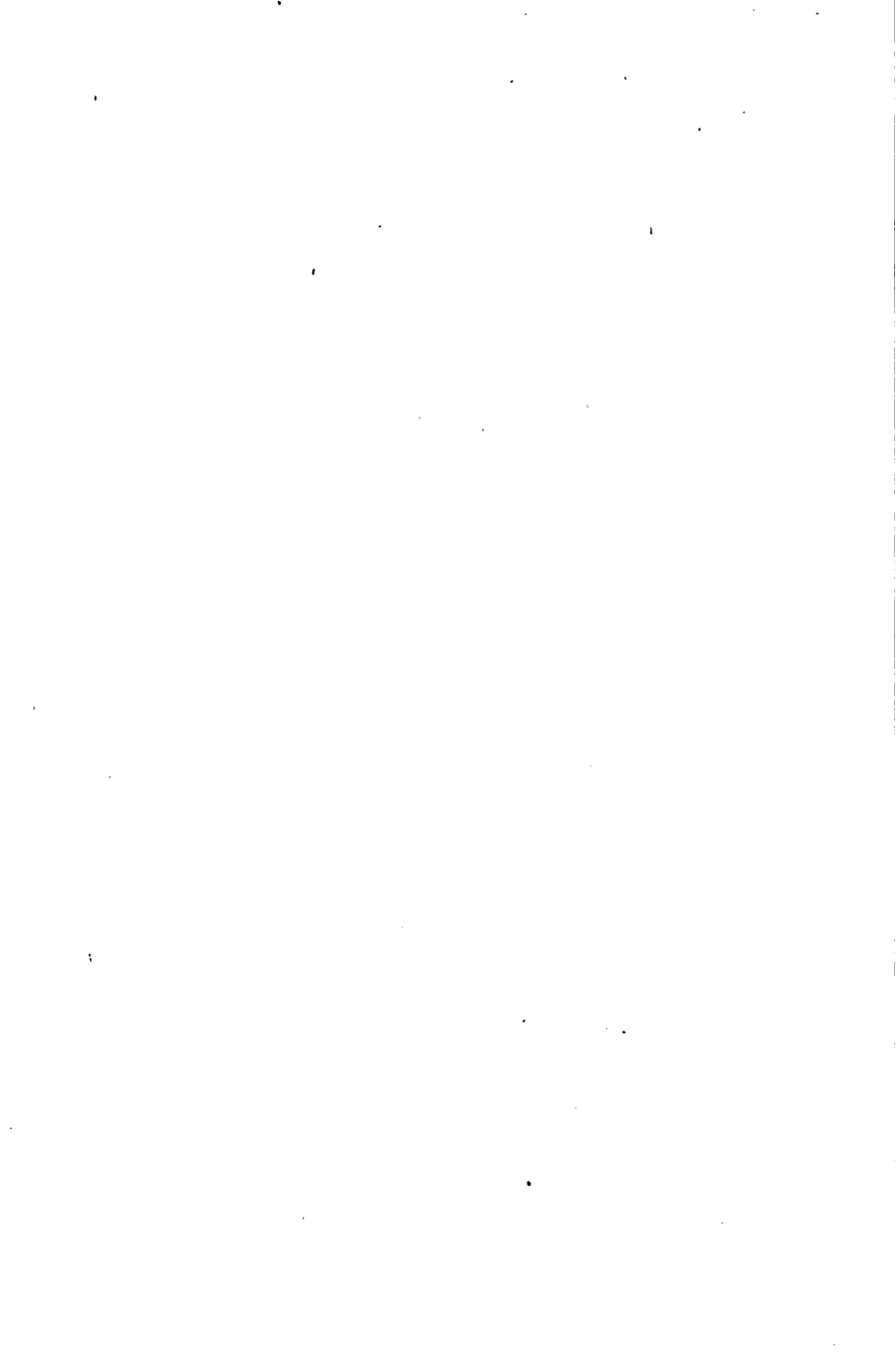
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